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Wednesday
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April 1996

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Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-065 *3 April 1996*

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Russia: Dudayev 'Ready' for Talks, Doubts Yeltsin's Sincerity

LD0204192696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1810 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, April 2 (Interfax) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev has said he is ready to hold peace talks with Russian President Boris Yeltsin through intermediaries but doubts whether Yeltsin's intent is sincere, according to a Dudayev interview with Azerbaijan's Turan news agency Tuesday.

Interfax has the full text of this interview.

Regarding the Chechnya peace plan announced by Yeltsin on March 31, Dudayev said that in his opinion "Moscow is not ready for any normal talks." Moscow is now short of time before the presidential elections, he said. That is why in the run-up to the elections the Kremlin has adopted a tactic of speaking about talks, but not actually holding them, Dudayev said.

The Chechen side "has always said and continues to say that we will not have to be waited for. Any problems can be resolved once Yeltsin displays good will," Dudayev said.

However, Dudayev reiterated his position under which "serious talks can be [held] only after combat actions end and troops are pulled out of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria."

Despite Yeltsin's statement on ending combat operations in Chechnya, "there is no trace of a cease-fire at all," Dudayev said. "Furthermore, after the so-called cessation of combat operations, combat actions escalated with new strength in some regions of the republic and are still continuing," he said.

When asked about possible mediators at talks with Yeltsin, Dudayev in particular named former USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaymiyev, Yabloko movement leader and Duma deputy Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, and Duma deputy Konstantin Borovoy. He said these people had earlier offered themselves as intermediaries. "Our position has not changed by now, and people on this list can act as intermediaries again," Dudayev said.

"In fact, there is simply no desire of Russian officials to end the conflict," Dudayev said in conclusion. "It seems that an end to the war will only take place under a new Russian president," he said.

"If Yeltsin wants to be re-elected for a second term, he must first fulfill the will of the Russian people who categorically oppose this war," Dudayev said.

Russia: Dudayev: Talks With Kremlin Impossible; No Capitulation

LD0204152196 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Chechen rebel leader] Dzhokhar Dudayev told the Azerbaijani news agency TURAN (INDEPENDENT) today that no real talks are currently possible with the Kremlin. To begin with, all troops should be completely withdrawn, the Chechen leader emphasized.

Yeltsin's team expects us to capitulate, but this will not happen — unquote [as heard].

Russia: Dudayev Insists Federal Troops Withdraw Before Talks

LD0304071696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0709 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Chechen rebels continued shelling and firing on positions of federal forces overnight. Gunmen opened fire four times in Groznyy, Itar-Tass learnt from a military source at the united group of federal forces in the Chechen Republic.

The detachment of gunmen led by Shamil Basayev (who committed a massacre in the city of Budennovsk, Stavropol Territory, in June 1995) opened fire and tried to attack positions of the 506th motorised regiment in the Vedeno district.

Army subunits, remaining at the place of their deployment, returned fire. Last night passed calmly near the villages of Orekhovo and Bamut. There was no information on casualties among servicemen.

According to the same source, the so-called presidential TV channel of local television broadcast a speech by separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev on Tuesday concerning the programme of settling the Chechen crisis, which was proposed by the Russian president.

Dudayev said that he would not start any talks with the Russian side until federal troops are completely withdrawn from Chechnya. Otherwise, the war will continue "to the last Chechen". Besides, Dudayev described the tripartite signing of the protocol of peace and accord in the republic as an act of treason by the administrations of towns and villages which signed the document.

Dudayev reported that he initiated criminal cases against the administrations of those villages and towns.

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In the meantime, several villages in the Nozhai-Yurt district plan to sign agreements of peace and accord on Wednesday.

Federal forces, Dudayev's rebels and the administrations of the Komsomolskoye, Goyskoye and Alkhazurovo villages (controlled by Chechen gunmen) continue today attempts to find a compromise in the negotiating process.

Russia: Dudayev Spokesman Calls Yeltsin's Peace Plan 'Political Game'

LD0204163696 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent Aleksey Kondulukov] We met Vagap Tutakov, Dudayev's representative in Russia, today.

[begin Tutakov recording] Dudayev has always been ready for talks. I think he is ready now, too. But Yeltsin's plan and his address indicate this plan was put forward for discussion in the full knowledge that it was unacceptable for our side; something was proposed which was known in advance that we could not accept. This is being proposed to discredit us in the event that we refuse to discuss this plan. This is simply a game, a political game in the run-up to the presidential elections. It is an integral part of the presidential campaign. [end recording]

[Kondulukov] Dudayev's official response should emerge in the next two or three days, after a meeting of the so-called state council of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, which the rebel Dzhokhar heads.

Russia: Yeltsin's Peace Move Seen Made Over Entourage's Opposition

MK0204125096 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Natalya Timakova and Aleksandr Budberg under the general heading: "Yeltsin Needs Peace. Dudayev Does Not Seem To. The President Makes Decisions Himself"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An analyst has remarked that the war in Chechnya is the cannonball on the president's feet that all his political rivals dream of keeping intact. But this also appears to be a weight on his heart, because for the person who started it in November 1994 and saw its consequences the need to end it must have become unbearable. [passage omitted]

Notably, Yeltsin made his choice at a time when pressure was mounting on him from all sides. It is not by chance that the Soskovets commission was abolished precisely at this moment after "having fulfilled its mission." In everyone's view, Oleg Nikolayevich [Soskovets] was a leader of the "party of war." Just as noteworthy, Yeltsin, already in the presence of journalists, added to the plan with his own "Mont Blanc" pen a provision calling for the possibility of holding talks with Dudayev through intermediaries. And that despite the fact that all the "power" agency heads, including General Prosecutor Skuratov, were opposed to that. That is, being keenly aware of the fact that the voters have become weary of bloodletting, Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] is trying his utmost to achieve a cease-fire. It is a pity that Dudayev might exploit the attempt at peacemaking as a breathing space.

But whatever one's attitude to the president might be, the latest goings-on have shown that Yeltsin still heeds his advisers but makes decisions on his own. At the same time, he is not afraid of expressly assuming responsibility. Hopefully, this time around everyone will turn out to have enough energy and decency to make everything possible to finish this war — and not use it to score a couple more points in the struggle for power.

Russia: Yeltsin's Chechnya Peace Plan Seen as Infeasible

MK0204124896 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 2 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Yuliya Kalinina under the general heading: "Yeltsin Needs Peace. Dudayev Does Not Seem To. A Chechen Utopia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When two sides are clinched in a fight, one side cannot halt combat operations and start pulling out its forces, because this would turn into a downright stampede. The other side will go on enthusiastically shooting at the retreating troops, who will have to put up escort elements along the entire route of their march, elements that will have no chance of ever joining their comrades. The columns will be attacked not only from the rear, but also from the front and from the flanks, forward vehicles will be set on fire, mines will be planted on the road, and servicemen will be picked off the armor by sniper shots. With a pullout like that we will lose at least as many people as we have already lost.

Combat operations cannot be stopped abruptly when you are on the enemy's territory. What you can do is announce such an intention and start talks with the enemy on a mechanism for a pullout and security guarantees for the troops being withdrawn. Furthermore, Grachev and Tikhomirov should discuss this subject with Dudayev, not between one another. Unilateral

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undertakings with regard to troop withdrawal will inevitably bring about a situation where the military will say: "We have been set up once again" — and they will be absolutely right. In other words, before stopping the war one needs to find out what plans the Dudayevites have in that regard.

Curiously, all steps proposed by Yeltsin are based on one premise that is taken for granted: It is believed that Dudayev wants to stop the war. It is unclear what the basis for this conviction can be. At present it is Yeltsin who needs to stop the war — otherwise he cannot win the election. Dudayev, on the contrary, wants Yeltsin to lose the election, so he is not eager to make peace at all. Yet Dudayev as president cannot indefinitely test the endurance of the Chechen people, who are at the end of their rope because of this war. The popular will could force Dudayev to make a compromise and to accept the peace, but then the peace proposal itself should in both its contents and form be in line with universally accepted rules of communication with presidents. If Yeltsin asserts that Dudayev is a "criminal kingpin," even the war-weary Chechens are bound to question the honesty of the Russian president's peaceful intentions, and the warmonger Dudayev will be forgiven by his people.

Generally speaking, Dudayev is now in a very advantageous position: In the end the troops will go one way or another. Owing to the approaching election, Yeltsin will simply have to stop the war — he has no other way out. Why then should Dudayev accept the Russian terms if he can dictate his own — and impudently so? And dictate he will — through those same middlemen on whom Yeltsin pins such great hopes.

The talks with Dudayev will turn into a farce. He will never say anything new, but everything that is old boils down to just one thing: first an independent Ichkeria, then everything else.

Holding elections for the republic's parliament is, perhaps, the only serious idea out of the whole set of peace initiatives, but nothing was said as to how they should be held. If this is done in the presence of Russian troops, this will not be a manifestation of popular will. We have already held such elections — now we have republic head Doku Zavgayev, who plays the part of a "voice-over," but cannot enter the stage for security reasons.

If it is planned to hold elections after the withdrawal of troops from Chechnya, they will inevitably be organized by the Dudayev side. A withdrawal will be followed by the return of the rebel fighters, nothing else. Frankly speaking, if we soberly assess the consequences of our peace initiatives, the presidential plan should have called first of all for the evacuation of the Zavgayev administration and the Russian-speaking population, but Yeltsin did not say a single word about that.

The entire responsibility for stabilization is placed on the republic's authorities. In order to shore up these authorities Russia has set up a huge Chechen militia force of either 7,000 or 11,000 men. We have equipped and armed yet more thousands of Chechens, which cost us a pretty penny.

Or take another provision of the plan: one that calls for funds to be channeled specifically to "peaceful" areas. Currently compensation is paid to pacified residents for lost housing and property. The compensation is distributed by commissions appointed by the district administration. A seat on such a commission costs 400 million rubles. You can imagine how much money one can make out of this post if such sums are paid just for obtaining it! Clearly, little will reach the long-suffering population, but a narrow group of Chechens is fast getting rich. For the time being these opportunities are confined only to "peaceful" areas, but according to the presidential plan they will in time be opened up to other residents as well.

Chechnya is Chechnya. Whether "peaceful" or not, money disappears there with equal swiftness, and for me, as a taxpayer, it is a pity that it goes into yet another "black hole."

I think that nearly all provisions of the plan should be assigned to the realm of the infeasible. You cannot kill people for 18 months in order to offer "a very wide-ranging autonomy, modeled on Tatarstan's," to those who are still alive and hope that they will understand you.

Russia: Daily Skeptical of Yeltsin's Peace Plan for Chechnya

MM0204153196 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Commentary by Nikolay Kozhanov: "Salvoes of Bullets and Words. Will Yeltsin's Program Stop the War?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] So, the president has had his say. The long-awaited program, "timetabled to the minute," which is capable, according to Boris Nikolayevich's assurances, of finally subduing this scourge of God — the Chechen war — has come into operation. One's first impression is that the peace plan for which the Kremlin's wise men have been preparing us at such tantalizing length, with such breathless excitement, has proved to be a concoction of "medicines" that have already been tried out to one degree or another by the authorities.

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There is the cessation of military operations in Chechnya from 1 April and the withdrawal of troops from "peaceful" regions to the borders of the republic. There is the convocation of a forum of "representatives of the Chechen people" and preparation for elections to the republic parliament. There is an amnesty for gunmen and talks, including talks with Dudayev himself "through intermediaries," on the status of Chechnya, and Moscow promises its opponents in advance the "maximum possible" concessions on the issue of sovereignty....

All well and good, and the president himself, answering the questions of "selected" journalists, was unusually talkative — except that the main thing that people would like to hear from him, to wit, how realistic the projected plan is, remained, as they say, off camera. Well, for example, what does it mean to cease "troop operations" forthwith? And presumably unilaterally: No one has asked Dudayev. So the troops immediately end the blockade of Dudayev's strongholds in the mountain regions of Chechnya. And not a word about disarmament, the release of prisoners and hostages.... But after all, we have seen all this before, it was all "rehearsed" several times last spring and summer, after Budennovsk. Truces, hearty embraces with Maskhadov. And the result is well known: The gunmen received a respite and reinforcements, filtered back into the regions that had been wrested from them with considerable bloodshed, and once again — Gudermes, Groznyy, Bamut, Vedeno, Samashki. Once again Russia buries its sons....

As for the "open-air" political forums mentioned by the president, they are all very well, of course, but there have been enough of those too in Chechnya before now. And even more than enough, if you recall, for example, the daily television footage from Groznyy showing the throbbing and dancing square outside the former "presidential palace." But nothing has been said about the republic's non-Chechen population or about the Cossacks, as if they no longer even have rights to the land of their forefathers.

And elections? There have been elections too. Both the head of the republic and the State Duma deputies were elected; the people voted for "Russia Is Our Home," but alas, Dzhokhar deemed these elections invalid. Is there any guarantee that the elections to the republic parliament will be any more to his liking?

It must be said that the president paid special attention this time round to the person of the rebel general. He argued verbosely about why the war with him was inevitable. As an argument he cited a book by Dudayev that had been "found" somewhere in which the author publicized his plans for creating a unified "Caucasian Republic" to include...Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Perhaps this is true: Certain other famous authors have written about how one of them will wash his boots in the Indian Ocean and another will undergo treatment in a rayon clinic. But however grateful the Georgians and Armenians are to the Russian president for saving them from Dudayev's aggression, one question will undoubtedly occur to them: Who armed this frenzied monster Dzhokhar anyway, who gave him the opportunity to create his own mighty army in contravention of all Russia's laws?

However, Boris Yeltsin delicately avoided this question, like his "personal contribution" to creating and consolidating Dudayev's regime. Moreover, the culprits for him, for no apparent reason, turn out to be yet again...the Communists. As if it was not Yeltsin's team that helped Dzhokhar overturn Chechnya's legitimate organs of power and establish a criminal regime in the republic. As if it was not Yeltsin whom the newly fledged "president," drawing on his own experience in these matters, instructed by letter how to dissolve parliament and adopt the right sort of Constitution. As if it was not Dudayev who warmly congratulated Boris Nikolayevich in October 1993 for crushing the "Communo-fascist revolt" and offered the help of his "unauthorized" troops...

False speeches are not, you would think, becoming for the Russian president, but what can you do — the elections are just round the corner, the Communists are treading on his heels, and he cannot be choosy about the means he uses to combat them. Since, according to some reports, Dudayev hopes that the Communists will come to power, it follows that they too are extremists. But there is nothing to stop us from doing business with Dudayev. Such is Yeltsin's "invincible" logic.

And in general, the president presented himself on television as the soft-hearted father of the people. He commiserated with the military in Chechnya, who are experiencing, in his words, considerable "hardships"; he marveled how they still have the strength and patience to fight. Only he kept silent about the reasons why the Army is starving, while some of those who have acquired property, whose possible "redistribution" so terrifies the president, are making fabulous profits out of this war. True, he promised to get to the bottom of the matter.

But be that as it may, the president's program for ending the war has been published. Read it and rejoice. On paper everything is smooth and coherent. We will see what happens in real life.

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Russia: Dudayev Press Minister Rejects Yeltsin's 'Propaganda Trick'

LD0204165496 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The operations carried out by the Russian military make Chechens distrust the Kremlin's peace initiatives. Movladi Udugov, minister for the press in Dudayev's government, is convinced that the Russian president's speech is yet another propaganda trick:

[begin Udugov recording] The way I see it is that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's speech can literally be summed up by the saying: shut up when you are talking to me. It is altogether incomprehensible how the president of Russia is hoping to get a peace process underway. You can only talk of halting, really halting the war in Chechnya, the war in the south of Russia, the war in the Caucasus, on condition that a clear and firm decision has been made to withdraw the Russian army from the territory of the Chechen Republic. [end recording]

Russia: Grachev: Troops in Chechnya Suspend Operations

LD0304103896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0944 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Interfax) — Russia's federal forces "will fulfill Russian President Boris Yeltsin's order on ceasing combat operations in Chechnya," said Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev.

No operations have been waged in Chechnya since April 2, he told journalists in Moscow Wednesday. "Everything has been suspended, the forces remain at the positions they occupied as of April 1," he said.

According to Grachev, units and detachments of the federal forces in Chechnya have been ordered "to concentrate in separate regions for withdrawal from the republic's territory." The federal forces leaving Chechnya will be withdrawn primarily to North Ossetia, to Vladikavkaz and Mozdok.

Federal forces units to be permanently stationed in Chechnya will be deployed on the aerodrome Severnyy in Groznyy's suburbs, in Khankala and Shali.

Fighters of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev continue shelling positions of the federal forces, Grachev reported. One serviceman was killed and six wounded as a result of 25 attacks over the previous 24 hours, he said.

"We shall respond with fire on fire" in those regions where shelling of the federal forces will be continued, he said. "After that we shall wage only special selective operations, in line with the presidential decree, against those formations which disobey the order."

"If there is no new decree and the situation does not change we shall not conduct any army operations. We entirely support peaceful solution of the Chechen conflict," Grachev said.

Russia: Volskiy Touts Shaymiyev as Intermediary in Chechnya Talks

MM0204140296 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Igor Rotar: "Mintimer Shaymiyev Could Be Best Intermediary in Talks With Dudayev"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Boris Yeltsin's agreement to talk with Dzhokhar Dudayev through an intermediary came as a complete surprise to me. It was the president improvising," IZVESTIYA was told by Prof. Valeriy Tishkov, member of Viktor Chernomyrdin's commission for settling the Chechnya crisis and in the recent past Russian minister for nationalities affairs. "Previously we had looked at the option of talking to Dudayev, but only in the event of his fundamentally changing his stance. And Tatar President Mintimer Shaymiyev was seen as an intermediary. There was no question of employing Nursultan Nazarbayev or the dissident Yuriy Orlov, much less an Arab shaykh. And even in the event of direct talks we would not plan to abandon the mechanism for cooperating with the Dudayevites already worked out by the Mikhaylov and Volskiy group. I believe it would be wrong to exclude the Dudayev delegation headed by Akhmed Yarikhanov from the negotiating process."

Arkadiy Volskiy, deputy head of the Russian delegation at last year's talks with the Dudayevites, assesses the decision to begin talks with Dudayev positively and simply in principle: "In any event talks are better than war." But, in the opinion of the chairman of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the fact that Shaymiyev was not mentioned as a possible intermediary is a mistake. "I believe that intermediaries from other countries should not be involved. Shaymiyev is probably the ideal intermediary. He has a concrete plan of action and, in my view, it would be easier for this politician to reach agreement with Dudayev. During the summer talks the Dudayev side had to all intents and purposes agreed to the 'Tatar option,' but it was not acceptable to us at the time. But now the situation may have changed, and if Shaymiyev were the intermediary, things might start moving," Volskiy said.

IZVESTIYA has learned that the Dudayev side is not ruling out in principle the possibility of talking to the

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Kremlin via intermediaries. But if these intermediaries (intermediary) are not given the widest powers, then, in their words, the talks will be deadlocked once again.

Russia: Chechen Field Commander Basayev Swears To Fight On

LD0204181496 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" news cast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified correspondent] Chechnya, the second day of the peace settlement. The fighters, forced into the mountains, are holding the villages of Alkhazurovo, Komsomolskoye, Goyskoye, Staryy Achkhoy, and about 10 villages in Vedenskiy District in the southeast of Chechnya, where they are commanded by Shamil Basayev.

Yesterday and today there have been reports from the federal command alleging that Basayev is ready to surrender to the authorities, if the latter let 600 fighters go from Vedeno. However, on the tape we received today, the Chechen field commander does not reveal the slightest hint of defeatism. Basayev said the following about the settlement plan proposed by the Russian president. [video shows Chechen fighters surveying terrain; Basayev studying map on a car hood, talking over a field telephone, observed by two small boys and some fighters]

[begin Basayev recording; over telephone] The Yeltsin plan is the most elementary cynicism, and undisguised cynicism, at that. It is an old policy — divide and rule. They assert that in the peace zones, as they call them, there are no troops; there are none to be withdrawn, because they have sent all the troops into the hills and today, even right now, fierce fighting is going on. From this it is clear how Yeltsin's order about halting all troop operations is being fulfilled. [end recording] [video shows Basayev speaking on field telephone out of doors]

[Correspondent] In the best case, in Basayev's view, the Yeltsin plan is an attempt to freeze the situation until the presidential elections and then the Russian troops will tackle the fighters in earnest. In any event, the Dudayev fighters have no intention of capitulating yet.

[begin recording] [Basayev] We will fight.

[Correspondent] How?

[Basayev] Using all the ways and means at our disposal, with no regard for any public or other opinion, because this public opinion all over the world keeps silent today, when we are being annihilated. [end recording]

[Correspondent] There have been reports from Chechnya today that the fighters are stepping up their actions in Shali District, where they are uneasily driving about in vehicles, armed, and calling on the population to assemble at rallies in support of Dudayev.

The mood in Groznyy is troubled, too. Military counterintelligence men discovered in one suburb a cache of Dudayev fighters' sabotage equipment — radio-operated explosives, bundles of Bickford fuse, and two mortars. It is not ruled out that it was from this cache that the fighters took plastic-type explosive for the mine discovered late last night on the road leading to Khankala aerodrome, where the command of the military grouping in Chechnya is located.

Groznyy is being patrolled with particular thoroughness today, with more than 700 Chechen militiamen engaged in this.

Everybody is waiting now to see how the Dudayev side will respond to Yeltsin's peace proposals.

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CIS: Primakov: Four-Sided Agreement Increases Importance of CIS

LD0204164196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1445 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 2 (Interfax) — The creation of the Community of Sovereign Republics (SSR) and the four-sided agreement signed between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan "is a crucial step in integration which not only does not decrease, but greatly increases the significance of the CIS," Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov said at the opening of a meeting of the Council of CIS Foreign Ministers.

The CIS "remains the main playing field upon which integration takes place on different levels and at different paces," Primakov said.

"The Commonwealth exists and develops, while all governments getting a head start on integration are keeping their unions open for others to join," he said. "This is very important, because it stimulates dynamic integration."

The path of multi-level and multi-paced integration "seems to be the right one," Primakov said. "Western governments are also taking this path."

CIS: Foreign Ministers Discuss Prospects for CIS Evolution

LD0204175496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1529 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 2 (Itar-Tass) — Prospects for the development of the Commonwealth of Independent States were in the focus of today's session of the Council of foreign ministers of the CIS member-countries which met in Moscow on Tuesday.

Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov said in his welcoming address to the session, "We have passed a very important stage in integration: first Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Russia signed an agreement on deeper integration, and today, we witnessed an event of great importance not only for Russia and Belarus but for all CIS member-countries — the formation of the Community of sovereign states."

"We are heading for a multi-level, multi-rate integration. This policy is obviously correct, as Western European states and many other countries of the world are now following this path," the Russian foreign minister said.

He stressed that all these processes are evolving within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, whose significance therefore does not diminish but, quite on the contrary, increases.

According to Primakov, the countries moving slightly ahead of others in the integration processes leave their alliances open for other countries to join.

"It is very important as it stimulates dynamics, but at the same time the Commonwealth is the main unit and the main field in which multi-level and multi-rate integration takes place," the Russian Minister stressed.

The Council of foreign ministers began its work with a discussion of the draft plan for the integrational development of the Commonwealth in 1996 and 1997.

The ministers focused on problems relating to European security and the strengthening of international cooperation. They also discussed measures to streamline the activity of the structures coordinating efforts aimed at implementing the agreement on collective security signed on May 15, 1992.

They discussed, among other things, arrangements for training personnel for the collective peacekeeping forces and implementation of earlier agreed actions designed to settle the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.

On Ukrainian initiative, the Council put on its agenda an item concerning a draft agreement on restoring rights to deported persons, national minorities and peoples.

CIS: Sovereign Republics Executive Committee Holds First Session

LD0204172296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1455 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian and Belarusian presidents Boris Yeltsin and Alyaksandr Lukashenka Tuesday held the first session of the executive committee of the Community of Sovereign Republics which the two presidents signed into existence on Tuesday morning.

Lukashenka was approved as the chairman of the Community's Supreme Council while Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was appointed as the executive committee's chairman, Yeltsin said at the session.

"Chernomyrdin will lead the executive committee for two years, after which he is likely to be succeeded by a Belarusian representative," Yeltsin said.

Belarusian Deputy Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alekseу

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Bolshakov will be deputy chairmen of the executive committee.

The two presidents instructed the executive committee to work out within a month proposals regarding the committee's budget, structure and program for performance to the end of 1996. The committee is expected to employ not more than 100 people, including its apparatus.

The committee's headquarters will be located in the premises of the Russian presidential administration in Moscow.

The Community's creation "was not easy," Chernomyrdin said. He thanked the Russian and Belarusian presidents for their "immense job" to create the Community. Chernomyrdin said he realized how great was the responsibility entrusted to him. "We are starting anew," he said, adding that the newly-created Community should work primarily "for people," Russian and Belarusian residents.

Chernomyrdin said he believed that the Community's creation was "the first realistic move towards deep integration." He voiced the hope that "other CIS countries will later engage themselves in this process."

Lukashenka agreed with the statement made by Chernomyrdin. However, the executive committee may face difficulties in its performance this year because Russia and Belarus have already adopted 1996 budgets which do not envisage additional expenditures, Lukashenka said.

The two countries will have to find funds "from additional sources within the scope of the budget," Lukashenka said.

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has given a high assessment to the treaty on deeper integration between Russia and Belarus, signed in the Kremlin Tuesday.

"Independent countries cannot be brought into any unions by force now," he said in an exclusive interview with Interfax. Chernomyrdin believes that the profound integration and cooperation between Russia and Belarus must be so efficient as to attract other countries.

According to him, it is "virtually impossible" to break apart "the reality in which people lived together for thousands of years."

"I have been working for concrete results all my life and now I am confident that joining our forces and capacities with Belarus will allow us to more quickly attain such living standards which would make the Russian-Belarusian union attractive for all," said Chernomyrdin.

"That is why one should not ask who will join this voluntary community next. Let every independent CIS country or others decide the issue for themselves. We do not want to subject anybody, we seek to work together so that our children and grandchildren live as one happy family," he said.

Russian State Duma chairman Gennadiy Seleznev is convinced that the Community of Sovereign Republics created by Russia and Belarus "will be attractive" for other CIS states, in particular, for Ukraine.

"I'd like Ukraine to assess this idea and the Ukrainian parliamentarians to do their best to join this Community," Seleznev said, addressing journalists Tuesday after the ceremony of signing of the treaty on creation of the Community of Sovereign Republics by the Russian and Belarusian presidents.

According to Seleznev, notorious resolutions of the State Duma dated March 15 (on effective denunciation of the Belovezh Accords) "have also stimulated such a pace" of integration processes but "the contribution and energy of the Belarusian president, his purposefulness should be evaluated more highly."

Commenting on signing of the Treaty, Seleznev said: "There are not many holidays in my life, today I have a holiday."

Asked by Interfax whether the abbreviation of the Community (SSR in the Russian language) will frighten former republics of the Soviet Union, Seleznev said: "It's a delightful name!" He assumed that the abbreviated form of the name of the new alliance will not frighten those wishing to join it.

The Russian-Belarusian agreement signed today demonstrates that the millenial ties binding the two peoples are once again an active factor in their lives, Boris Yeltsin's Head of Administration Nikolay Yegorov told Interfax Tuesday.

"The process of destroying these ties brought serious damage to both peoples, economically above all," he said. "Our Slavic souls above all demanded this union. But behind this natural urge stands a clear program of planned, joint action."

"I have already agreed with the Belarusian chief of staff to examine the issues arising with integration," Yegorov said. "Work on creating an actual working mechanism for integration ran parallel for months with the preparation of the Russian-Belarusian agreement. This will provide for the conquering of those challenges set by the presidents of both countries who Tuesday signed this historic document," he said.

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CIS: CIS Air Defense System Launched on Western Border 1 Apr

WS0304122796 Minsk BTK Television Network in Belarusian 1800 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The CIS defense ministers are planning to launch the integration of their air defense systems.

As of 1 April, the integrated air defense system will begin to operate on the CIS western border. There are plans to conduct the integration of air defense systems on the CIS southern border as of May, and on the border with Turkey from 1 June, in collaboration with relevant Georgian systems.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 3 April

LD0304054996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0439 GMT 3 Apr 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Today's leading newspapers centre on the Treaty on forming the Community of Sovereign Republics. "The presidents have fulfilled the will of the Russian and Belarusian peoples," states the ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper. "The door is open. Who's next?" asks the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA daily.

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper carries a jubilant article analysing the Integration Document signed by the two presidents and draws a conclusion that this is not a protocol of intent, "as it was baptised by some sceptics before its signing".

"The treaty is specific. It is mandatory in many ways for the leaders of the two states," the daily emphasises.

IZVESTIYA analyst Otto Latsis is not so optimistic in his appraisal. Comparing "the Treaty of the Two" with "the Treaty of the Four", he asks the question of what new features the document uniting Russia and Belarus contains.

Drawing the conclusion that the documents provide for a movement in the same direction, although the Russia-Belarus case presupposes a quicker movement and more definite periods, the author challenges feasibility of some specific provisions of the treaty.

"Will not the treaty mean 'a backward acceleration' instead of onward acceleration?" the analyst expresses apprehension.

Russia's future depends on the outcome of the coming presidential elections, claims Nikita Vainonen in ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI.

Arguing with some provisions in the election platform of left-wing forces, Vainonen, using statistics of the communist past, shows the inefficient nature of the planned economy, a return to which may create an illusion of improvement only for "a time when we consume accumulated reserves".

Thoughts of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA political analyst Pavel Voshchanov are permeated with the same axiety over the outcome of the coming elections. He challenges a wide-spread opinion that "people will be able to understand everything and to tell the genuine from the forged".

"History of Russia in the 20th century is a chain of bloody upheavals," he writes. "Each of them became possible only due to the fact that people, desirous of simple solutions, rushed headlong into the abyss of civil hatred, without thinking for whom and for the sake of what the road to power was being cleared".

IZVESTIYA prints an article by its military reporter Viktor Litovkin who quotes data established by an inspection carried out by the chief trade administration of the Russian Defence Ministry. Data show large embezzlement of cash in this system.

"Generals squandered billions which could be used to feed the entire Russian army for two and half months," the newspaper writes.

The PRAVDA newspaper carries a letter by scholars in law entitled "Passions around Duma (Eds: Russian parliament lower house): Are they logical?"

Scholars, worried by a danger of confrontation between the executive and legislative arms of government, seek to show groundlessness of accusations against the State Duma in connection with its recent decisions on the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements (Eds: The then leaders of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine came to the Belovezhye Forest for a meeting, as a result of which they concluded agreements which meant the collapse of the Soviet Union).

"The decisions taken by the State Duma do not give any grounds to interpret them that they put into doubt Russia's sovereignty, destabilise the legal system of the Russian Federation and make unclear international obligations of Russia," they claim.

The spring military conscription started on April 1. The ARGUMENTY I FAKTY weeky takes an interview from Merited Doctor of Russia Svetlana N. Kovtun about the health condition of present conscripts.

Statistics shows, the doctor says, that there are no more than five percent of really healthy teenagers among conscripts throughout Russia. On the other hand, over 60 percent of teenagers are chronic patients.

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Russia: Yeltsin Receives UN Deputy Secretary General 3 Apr

LD0304111196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1030 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Andrey Surzansky]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin met on Wednesday with U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovskiy. Petrovskiy informed the president of the activity of U.N. departments and services in Geneva. Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev informed journalists of Russian news agencies of this. He said the meeting had been held at Petrovskiy's request.

In the afternoon, as was planned, Yeltsin will visit the Central Electoral Commission to be registered as a candidate for the Russian presidential election to be held in June.

Russia: UN Report on Chechnya Excludes Yeltsin's Peace Plan

LD0204201996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1846 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By Konstantin Pribytkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GENEVA, April 2 (ITAR-TASS) — The peace plan for Chechnya laid out by President Boris Yeltsin on March 31 has found no place in today's report of U.N. Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, the Russian delegation said.

Butrus-Ghali's report on human rights in Chechnya was published today in Geneva, now the venue of the 52nd session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

The Russian delegation to the session issued a statement regretting the fact that Russia's peace move has not been reflected in the secretary-general's report.

"In our view, the report could have been delayed a day or two in order the exceptionally important statement by the Russian president was still reflected in it," the delegation's deputy leader Vladimir Parshikov said.

The Russian delegation regretted the fact that the report of Butrus-Ghali had not included the summary of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Fausto Pocar, who visited Moscow last Saturday.

"It would be useful if the freshest information was present in the report," Parshikov said.

The Russian delegation's response to the report is "initial, preliminary", Parshikov said, adding that scrutiny of the report is continuing.

He said Russia's overall appraisal of the report, as of any other document by Butrus-Ghali, is "due respect" for "the document which has a fairly solid status".

"The second thing which catches the eye is a disproportionately large place which is given in the text to reports of nongovernmental organisations which no one had verified," Parshikov said.

"In our view, many of those reports have an obviously tendentious anti-Russian character. Therefore, there is an impression that the balance of the report is lost, and accents in the section which cites the nongovernmental organisations are made with a tilt in the anti-Russian direction," Parshikov said.

Russia: Keeping Integration Safe From 'Demagogues' Urged

MM0304093996 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by observer Aleksandr Golts under the "Week's Topic" rubric: "Integration: No Entry to Demagogues!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The former Soviet republics' integration has been the chief topic of this week, as well as the previous week. Practically every prominent politician in the new independent states (or everyone who considers himself such) has hastened to speak out on this subject. Most realize that the desire for unification is not a concept invented by someone. It is an insistent requirement of the times. They are in a hurry to subscribe to the predominant trend by advancing particular integration plans. There have also been extremes: Some are already dreaming of creating a new unified state, while others get hysterical at the mere thought of the possibility of recreating the USSR. At the same time they quite cleverly pass on their own hysteria to those who believe them. You will agree that when some gentleman sinisterly promises on television a "second Chechnya" in the event of the unification of Russia and Belarus, and when there is a protest demonstration taking place in Minsk at the same time, it makes you think. At least about the fact that integration is too serious and delicate a matter to let demagogues and political intriguers be involved in it.

It so happened that the integration process started to gather momentum at the height of an acute internal political struggle both in Russia (occasioned by the presidential race) and in other Commonwealth states. It is natural that any unification options at once become a weapon in the political skirmish. This sometimes runs to paradoxical lengths. Thus, observers perceived in a joint statement by three presidential candidates ostensibly devoted to integration an allusion to a pooling

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of efforts.... But, alas, not the efforts of republics but of these specific figures.

Anyone who attempts to understand which of the current politicians really want to promote integration processes and which are simply trying to use them in their own interests could get caught out in this situation. I believe that the litmus test here is whether a politician speaks of integration "in general" or whether he is engaged in resolving some perfectly specific questions connected with unification.

It is no secret that the former Soviet republics have become quite far removed from each other both economically and politically. What is needed now in order to pool resources without causing upheavals is highly complex, painstaking work. This has resulted in the documents signed 29 March by the leaders of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. These documents, as you can understand, concern rather boring problems: the creation of a single customs zone, a single regime of investment activity and acquisition of real estate, common methods for pricing the output of natural monopolies, convertibility of currencies, etc. You cannot invent out of these problems a catchy slogan in the style of "Forward" or, conversely "Down with," and it is rather hard to shout them at a rally. But, without resolving them, all talk of integration is nothing more than a load of bull.

It is far from always simple to resolve these problems. It is no secret that it is more advantageous today to get a commodity to Belarus, let us say, from the "far abroad." And then from there directly to Russia, circumventing imposts and taxes. Far from all the CIS countries are prepared to recognize some common regulations. Still less are they prepared to delegate their powers to suprastate organs capable of monitoring the fulfillment of these regulations.

This is why the idea of "different speeds" within the CIS framework — an idea criticized by some people — has come into being. Those who are able and willing to do so unite. Others are left with the right to use milder integration schemes. Truth to tell, I do not regard as valid the fears that different degrees of integration will disappoint the republics within the CIS which do not join a tighter circle. After all, they have the right to choose.

If we all the time emulate those who, against the true national interest, intend to keep their independence, then we can hardly extricate the Commonwealth from the amorphous state in which it finds itself. In addition, certain partners in the CIS might labor under a very dangerous illusion: They can achieve more by slowing down integration, not developing it. It is no secret that the West is very wary of any "promoted" forms of unification of the post-Soviet area. This is why some people in Kiev, let us say, are clearly in a hurry to sell their unyieldingness within the Commonwealth framework as dearly as possible to the West. Just one thing can prove the erroneousness of such calculations: the effective and advantageous nature of cooperation within the framework of CIS structures.

Clearly, such a "variable-speed" approach is also useful when resolving security problems. This was demonstrated by the Defense Ministers Council of the CIS countries, which has just held a session. For example, everyone is aware of the importance of creating a combined air defense system. The leaders of the military departments have already resolved specific organizational and financial questions. The need for a committee of chiefs of staff of the CIS countries' armed forces is obvious to everyone. But only Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan have proved ready to jointly ensure regional security. This is indicated by documents drawn up by the three countries' ministries of defense.

It is obvious that the CIS states still have quite a way to go before they learn to formulate a single integrated opinion on any urgent questions, as the NATO countries manage to do. It does not matter who — the executive or the legislature — sets the tone here (quite a lot of views on this have appeared recently). In any case, parliamentarians have a wealth of specific work to do in the sphere of integration. This was pointed out by Yegor Stroyev and his Belarusian counterpart Semyon Sharetskiy, who signed an agreement setting up a mixed commission of the two countries' parliaments, which is to tackle the rapprochement of legislation in the budget and financial sphere.

So the integration process is clearly under way. We should not endanger its success. We should not spoil it by haste, political blather, promises, or threats. For, quite honestly, there are things a bit more important than someone's political fate. And even a bit more important (it is terrible to say it) than presidential elections. The opportunity for peoples who once lived in the same state to live and work together, fearing nothing, is just such a thing.

Russia: 'Specific' Pact With Belarus Belies 'Skeptics' Predictions

MM0304092196 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 3 Apr 96 pp 1, 2

[Article by Aleksandr Gamov: "We Are Back in the SSR!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] So yesterday the Russian and Belarusian presidents, as they had promised, signed a

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long-awaited document in the Kremlin. According to the comments of Boris Yeltsin during the solemn ceremony, this is a treaty on creating a "Community of Sovereign States." But in the interpretation of Alyaksandr Lukashenka, it is a question "of forming a Community of Sovereign Republics" [Russian initials: SSR].

The variant reading is probably attributable to the fact that Alyaksandr Hryhoryyevich arrived only that morning and, having had only a brief meeting with Boris Nikolayevich, did not have time to "approve the title." So the announcer's voice resounding in St. George's Hall gave the document a simpler name: "Treaty on forming a Community." ITAR-TASS made an essential addition: "...of two states."

However, whatever the document is called (although naturally this too is an important point), it marks an important event. In the words of Aleksiy II, patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, who spoke yesterday in the Kremlin's Cathedral Square, "...two fraternal peoples who were baptized together with the consanguineous Ukrainian people in the same Kievan font and who for centuries built their lives together and vanquished many terrible dangers are taking a fresh step toward unity after a brief and unfortunate separation."

It is regrettable that "consanguineous Ukraine" is still languishing in the "misfortune of separation." Of the Black Sea Fleet.

Over the next few days, the presidents promised, we will receive detailed explanations of how specifically the new "Community" will differ from the present "Commonwealth" and what the priority measures to implement the treaty are — a document about this was also signed yesterday in the Kremlin "as a matter of priority." These questions have still to be straightened out in order to arrive at total mutual understanding. While in his speeches yesterday Boris Yeltsin placed the emphasis mostly on our "common Slav roots," "many centuries of common history," and "the combination of efforts," Alyaksandr Lukashenka was more specific and hoped for the "pooling of the intellectual and material resources of the Belarusian and Russian peoples," which will make it possible to "more rapidly overcome the crisis phenomena."

Nevertheless, the seven-page Integration Document signed by the Russian and Belarusian presidents, despite all the pitfalls, inspires optimism. Because this is by no means a "protocol of intent," as some skeptics dubbed it before it was signed. The treaty is specific, and imposes many obligations on the two states' leaders.

Above all it is striking that the sides pledge to coordinate their foreign policy, to have a common position on the main international issues, and to collaborate in ensuring security and the protection of borders and in the fight against crime. With the aim of establishing a single economic area and ensuring the effective operation of a common market and the free movement of goods, services, capital, and manpower, Russia and Belarus intend before the end of 1997 to synchronize the stages, timetable, and scope of economic reform and to create a "single normative and legal base in order to remove any interstate barriers and restrictions and ensure equal opportunities for free economic activity."

Another important point, in our view, is the fact that the treaty presupposes the creation of a Community Higher Council that will include the heads of state and government, the leaders of parliament, and the chairman of the Executive Committee. The Higher Council will not only resolve key questions of the development of the Community as a whole but also monitor and direct the activity of its organs to implement decisions. In other words, it is something that the leaders of the CIS countries have long sought but have never been able to achieve in all these years.

So, as President Yeltsin noted at the treaty-signing ceremony, "henceforth we will travel together, shoulder to shoulder, the road of cardinal reforms and renewal." What will this road be like? What will be the fate of the Community over the next few months and years? What other states will it admit to membership? The answer is trite: Life itself will answer these tricky questions. But it must be noted that the idea of such a rapprochement is also dictated by life.

Let us hope that everything will work out according to the equation:

Life x life = life!

Russia: Lukashenka, Chernomyrdin Lead Russo-Belarusian Community

LD0204144696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1421 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 2 April (ITAR-TASS) — President Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarus was today approved as chairman of the supreme council of the Russo-Belarusian Community, and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin as chairman of the community's executive committee. This was announced today by President Boris Yeltsin, speaking at the first founding session of the community's Executive Committee.

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Russia: Moscow Fears Possible Crisis in Korea, Urges Dialogue

LD0304104896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1018 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — Russia is concerned over the possible crisis around the agreement on the demilitarised zone separating North and South Korea and fears possible clashes there.

"We think a crisis is likely to develop around the agreement on the demilitarised zone. Even clashes are not ruled out," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov told Itar-Tass.

"Unfortunately, a pattern has emerged: a situation is first brought to a head, an explosion or a crisis, and efforts to normalise it are taken thereafter," Panov said.

"Our approach is quite different. There is a mass of problems — let us tackle them in a civilised way and look for a solution to the package," he said.

"The Korean problem requires participation of many countries. If all concerned parties, including the United Nations, pool their efforts, a formula can be found which will be acceptable to all," he said.

"We do forecast a possible aggravation of the situation but we hope that it will not go as far as direct clashes," the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister said.

Panov was speaking ahead of the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation between Russia and North Korea will be held in Pyongyang from April 10 through 12.

The Russian delegation to the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation between Russia and North Korea will be led by the commission's Russian cochairman Vitaliy Ignatenko, a vice-premier of the Government of the Russian Federation.

Concomitantly with the meeting of the commission, bilateral political consultations at the level of deputy foreign ministers will be held in the North Korean capital.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov told Itar-Tass, "We shall discuss everything — bilateral relations and international issues. The aim of the meeting is to resume and continue dialogue between Russia and North Korea."

He noted that the situation on the Korean peninsula will naturally be in the focus, particularly in view of the recent statement by North Korea about the impossibility to abide by the truce agreement.

"We have much to speak about," the Russian deputy minister said. As concerns ways of peaceful settlement of the Korean problem, Panov said Russia's proposal for holding a multilateral international conference on security in the region remained the best possible solution.

"We understand that it is difficult to organise, and some people take it hard, but there is nothing better," the Russian diplomat stressed.

He said Russia and China had an identical, "absolutely identical" approach to the Korean issue. China and Russia believe that the old system must be kept in place until a new system is created to ensure security on the Korean peninsula.

"It is necessary to conduct dialogue and negotiations," the Russian deputy foreign minister said. "Dialogue between two Koreas is very important. We hope that the partners will realise the need for talks the further the better," Panov added.

Russia: Primakov Describes Foreign Policy Priorities

MM0204134896 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov by correspondent Aleksandr Golts; place, date not given: "Yevgeniy Primakov: Russia's Foreign Policy Must Be Many-Vectored"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yevgeniy Primakov has been head of the Russian foreign policy department for three months. He was appointed to that post at a time when exceptionally complex problems were facing our diplomacy. How is the foreign minister proposing to solve these problems? Yevgeniy Primakov talked about this with KRASNAYA ZVEZDA and INTERFAX correspondents.

[Golts] Yevgeniy Maksimovich, today you often hear it said that Russia is too limited in its means to pursue effective diplomacy. On top of that the tricky domestic political situation and the approaching presidential elections also exert a substantial influence on foreign policy. Please tell me what tasks our diplomacy is setting itself in this complex situation. What can it and should it do?

[Primakov] I naturally agree that we no longer have the possibilities that the USSR enjoyed. At the same time I do not think that the preelection situation restricts our possibilities. At any rate, Russia is implementing its own

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foreign policy by no means on the basis of current circumstances but on the basis of its own colossal potential. This is primarily the country's tremendous intellectual potential, on top of which we have considerable natural resources, a big population, and a vast territory.

Finally, there is our country's historical role. Russia is not a parvenu, not a lowly upstart in international relations. Even before 1917 Russia was an active participant in world politics. It subsequently retained and augmented its significance in the international arena. Russia was and remains a great power. And, like any great power, its policy must be many-vectored and multifaceted.

That is why I totally reject the idea that Russia's foreign policy should be confined to a specific region or be keyed to specific events.

[Golts] Russian-American relations exert a prime influence on the whole of international life. How do you view their present state and prospects?

[Primakov] We are perfectly well aware of the full importance of relations with a state that possesses tremendous economic, military, and political potential. At the same time I want to emphasize that these relations can develop only on an equal basis. We have a large sphere where interests coincide. There is the stabilization of the situation in various regions of the world. There is the fight against international terrorism and organized crime.

But it should not be forgotten that on a number of issues our interests do not coincide. We should do everything possible to ensure that this divergence does not become antagonistic. We are prepared to travel this road. However, we are entitled to expect that the United States too will seek to make relations with Russia as positive as possible. And we will never consent to taking a back seat in these relations.

[Golts] But the visits of NATO Secretary General Solana and U.S. Secretary of State Christopher very clearly revealed the divergence between Russia's interests and those of the United States and a number of other Western countries. Both Christopher and Solana very definitely stood their ground, emphasizing that NATO enlargement is a closed issue. How is Russia going to act in this situation?

[Primakov] I utterly disagree with those of our public figures and journalists who regard NATO enlargement as now a foregone conclusion. They tell us: NATO is expanding, and since there is nothing we can do to stop this, we will have to put up with it. This position runs counter to Russia's national interests, and so we want to prevent NATO enlargement. And the most important thing is to prevent the NATO military infrastructure from approaching our territory.

I am asked: What are you going to do if NATO enlargement goes ahead despite everything? I reply: We will think about our reaction. But the reaction will be appropriate. For all our desire to work toward deepening and expanding positive processes in the world, we will never allow blows to be struck against Russia's national interests.

But this is not a dead-end position. Solutions can be found, of course, but in order to do that they must be sought.

[Golts] Another acute problem in our relations with the United States is ratification of the START II Treaty, which is apparently firmly "stuck" in the Duma. What prospects do you see here?

[Primakov] As foreign minister, I deem it necessary to recommend that this treaty be ratified. At the same time I realize that such ratification is difficult or even impossible without guarantees that the United States will not develop an ABM [antiballistic missile] system for the country. In other words we need guarantees that the ABM Treaty will not be undermined.

[Golts] Yevgeniy Maksimovich, what is your view of the division of states into near and far abroad? How do you see the prospects of integration processes within the CIS?

[Primakov] Without plunging into terminological disputes, we should proceed from the premise that our main foreign policy priority is relations with the countries that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We place them in a special category.

As for integration processes, they certainly have an objective basis. Many regions of the world are now seeking integration. The scale of the area creates the best conditions for the growth of production forces. Our region certainly cannot remain on the sidelines. After all, nowhere was as high a degree of integration ever achieved as in the former Soviet Union. But this in no way means that we want the restoration of the USSR. The sovereignties of the CIS countries are irreversible. But this by no means prevents the delegation of a certain proportion of these sovereignties to interstate structures, as has happened in West Europe, for instance.

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Russia: Grachev, Polish Counterpart Discuss Military Cooperation

LD0304110696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1029 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev on Wednesday told his Polish counterpart Stanislaw Dobrzanski that the two countries needed to work out a new form of mutual military cooperation.

Grachev told a meeting of a Russian and Polish military delegations in Moscow that he and Dobrzanski, at preceding tete-a-tete negotiations, reached a preliminary agreement to appoint a Russian-Polish expert group whose task would be "to work out a plan for new bilateral cooperation in fields which interest us."

The Polish minister, for his part, said "cooperation with Russia meets the political interests of Poland" and that Warsaw "is interested in good relations with Moscow."

The two ministers are also due to discuss NATO's planned enlargement and European security.

Grachev is also going to familiarize Dobrzanski with the issue of flank limitations established for Russia by the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty.

Russia: Grachev Gives Results of Talks With Polish Counterpart

LD0304114096 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 3 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia and Poland need a new form of cooperation in the military and military-technological spheres, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said today before meeting Stanislaw Dobzanski, his Polish counterpart. The meeting itself was held behind closed doors.

After the meeting, Grachev announced its results to journalists:

— in 1996 several joint Russian-Polish exercises will be held;

— Poland will also take part in Russian-U.S.-Ukrainian exercises, which were recently agreed upon by the Russian, Ukrainian, and U.S. defense ministers in Kiev.

Grachev also said that Poland is interested in supplies of Russian weapons, hardware, and spares, and is proposing to reciprocate by maintaining Russian navy vessels at its shipyards. However, this issue will be discussed with Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets.

Speaking about Poland's intention to join NATO, Grachev said that Russia's stance on this matter has remained unchanged.

[Begin Grachev recording] We are opposed to any country joining NATO. We realize, however, that this is every state's own affair. [end recording]

[Announcer] The conversation then moved on to Chechnya. Grachev said that no troops operations have been conducted since 2 April in line with the president's decree.

[Begin Grachev recording] Everything has been suspended. The troops have remained at the positions they occupied by 1 April. They have been ordered to move to designated base areas for subsequent withdrawal. [end recording]

[Announcer] The subunits which are ready for withdrawal will be mainly pulled out into Vladikavkaz and Mozdok, Grachev said. However, the minister has not announced a time scale for this operation.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Advances Toward Reelection With Chechnya Peace Plan

MK0204125196 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Pavel Felgengauer: "A New Olive Branch"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The prospects that Moscow could withdraw its troops and build an "impenetrable" cordon at the border do not frighten the champions of Chechnya's full independence. The cordon is sure to be a semi-permeable one: The Chechens will be able to get through to the Russian Federation and come back with spoils, whereas for the Russian troops and law-enforcement agencies the territory of a sovereign Ichkeriya [Chechnya] (a full-bodied UN member) will be entirely inaccessible. As is known, for two decades, despite all of its expenses, sacrifices, and efforts, Israel has proven unable to isolate itself completely from terrorist bases on Lebanese territory. Its border with Lebanon, however, is many times less lengthy than the one between Russia and Chechnya, while Israeli checkpoints do not let gunmen through for a bribe.

The war in the Caucasus will continue until proponents of Chechnya's independence become convinced of the utter pointlessness of an armed fight. Before the presidential election, however, they have no reason to lay down their arms, since many people in Chechnya believe that a possible Yeltsin defeat will also mean defeat of the idea of Russia's territorial integrity. The situation seems obviously hopeless — and still, after a two-month, agitating pause, Boris Yeltsin all of a sudden announces that a peace plan has already been worked out and is already being implemented. At the same time, by his edict, he is shifting the main responsibility for implementation of the "settlement program" to a state commission headed by Premier Chernomyrdin, with the participation of members of the houses of parliament.

No one will say now that Yeltsin is doing nothing for peace. If, however, yet another unilateral armistice fails to stop the bloodshed and terrorist acts, it is above all the Chechens and — indirectly — members of the Duma opposition, who criticize Boris Yeltsin and undermine Russia's unity, who will be blamed for this. Therefore, a majority of the other candidates for president had to support — although with certain reservations — the new peace plan, and Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, even said that all the provisions of Boris Yeltsin's program without exception "echo old initiatives of the Communists."

By having announced a settlement in Chechnya, the president has advanced himself one step further toward his reelection.

Russia: Yeltsin's Election Platform To Stress Nonpartisanship

MK0304113496 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 13, 31 Mar-7 Apr 96 (signed to press 1 Apr 1996) p 6

[Unattributed interview with Sergey Filatov, chairman of the coordinating committee of the All-Russia Movement in Support of Boris Yeltsin; place, date not given: "'Elections Without Winners or Losers'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The president is expected to promulgate his election program at a congress of the All-Russia Movement in Support of Boris Yeltsin.

[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI] Can any sensations be expected? After all, only recently the president addressed the Federal Assembly, which many saw as his election platform.

[Filatov] The address to the Federal Assembly is a program of action for 1996. The task of the election platform is to show the prospects for the next four years; that is, what it is planned to change, to consolidate, or to abandon.

Many voters are in a state of confusion, failing to understand what kind of society we are building. Therefore today it is not enough to say that our goal is to continue reform. I think that there is no way the president can do that without clarifying the notion of "reform" in his election campaign. In particular, it is important to explain the meaning of the building of a federative, law-governed, democratic, social state, as proclaimed in the Constitution.

It is essential to show that, no matter what, the country is developing in the direction that was proclaimed by Boris Yeltsin in his 1991 election program. Everybody who looks at this program will see that it has been fulfilled by 90 percent. Of course, there were mistakes and failures, especially in the economic sphere. But four years ago nobody could predict what difficulties would confront us....

[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI] The time remaining before the elections may not be enough to explain to the people everything that was not explained during the four years....

[Filatov] One mistake of the incumbent authorities has been the loss of close contact with the voters. There have been tours around the country, meetings, and public statements. But there is no trustful relationship between

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the citizenry and the ruling authority. It is hard to tell what the reason for this is or at what stage this relationship, which existed earlier, was interrupted. Be that as it may, the result has been the appearance of a huge number of vacillating voters who cannot decide which power system is better, because they do not understand what is going on in the country.

I think that the authorities still have a chance to win the confidence of the waverers, establishing a dialogue with society. This, however, calls for efforts not only by Moscow leaders but also by regional leaders. Thus far many of them are trying to build up their authority in a not quite honest way: They take credit for the success stories of the policies pursued in the country, while attributing its failures to the "center." As a result, local elections are carried by the head of a local administration or by the head of a republic, who are getting up to 70 percent of the vote, while the rating for the federal authorities, according to polls, is a mere 10 recent. It appears that in the majority of the regions things are going very well, but very badly in the country at large.

[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI] The program of Boris Yeltsin's main rival in the presidential elections — Gennadiy Zyuganov — is rather ideologized. Does it not seem to you that the president will have to bring in an "ideological dimension" in his own election program?

[Filatov] The president has no party of his own, and this is good for the country. He takes guidance not from ideology in his activity, but from the Constitution. Today, when the legislative base for the implementation of basic constitutional provisions bearing on human rights is not yet in place, the advent in power of an ideological party can be disastrous. Party interests will inevitably be placed above the interests of the state and the individual. I do not think that the president will take a party position. Rather, a keynote of his election campaign should be the consolidation of society for the sake of achieving a common goal.

The election platform of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] leaders is not only ideologized. It is bellicose. The voters are in effect being called to look for an enemy — the culprit in all Russian woes. The people are being called on to take power in their hands. In effect it means this: transfer power to the hands of the Communist Party. Such aggressiveness is dangerous — not so much in the run-up to the elections as after them. After all, part of society will certainly be dissatisfied with the results. The most terrible thing will be if this becomes cause for a new confrontation. The president's supra-party position shows that he is convinced of the following: There should be neither winners nor losers in the elections. It is important to show that Boris Yeltsin is the president of the whole people, not just a certain section of the people, and that he is ready to remain such a president.

Russia: Zyuganov's Visit to Ryazan Highlighted

MK0204140496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Semen Shatskoy under the "Visit" rubric: "Zyuganov Praises Stroyev in Ryazan. The CPRF Leader Wants To Win the Election in the First Round"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A man of business, was what Gennadiy Zyuganov, on a visit in Ryazan on Saturday [30 March], called Yegor Stroyev, current chairman of the Federation Council and governor of Orel Oblast, from which they both hail. The leader of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] State Duma faction — so far the sole registered candidate for Russian president — singled out the senate speaker from among all the top persons of the current authorities, whose policy he branded as social Darwinism, because, among other things, Stroyev insisted on holding elections for the head of the Orel Oblast administration even at a time when they were still banned throughout the Russian Federation and scored a convincing victory. Gennadiy Andreyevich himself reassured his Ryazan followers, saying that there are 20-25 million like-minded people all over Russia, which translates into 40-50 percent of the vote even in the first round of the presidential election.

The CPRF leader was welcomed as a big shot from Moscow. There is a tradition in Ryazan: A motorcade leaves the oblast capital to meet a procession heading for it from Moscow on the oblast border. This is precisely how it was this time: The honorary escort for the visitor consisted of both State Duma deputies from Ryazan Oblast — Leonid Kanayev and Sergey Yenkov — and also Anatoliy Ionov, elected on the CPRF list, and all members of the Ryazan Oblast Communist Party Committee. Girls in traditional Russian clothing, including tiara-like headdresses — kokoshniks — to welcome the guests with bread and salt were also provided.

After receiving greetings from his party comrades at the oblast border, the CPRF leader learned from them that Gennadiy Merkulov, head of the Ryazan Oblast Administration, chose to avoid a personal encounter with him, leaving second-ranking officials on duty at the administration building. The tactlessness toward Boris Yeltsin's chief rival — forgivable for a governor appointed by the president — forced Mr. Zyuganov to rework his initial

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schedule, and he preferred "Avangard," a former collective farm turned joint-stock company, headed by the chairman of the oblast's Agrarian Union, to a courtesy visit to the local administration.

After the meeting with the rural public at a farm that has enjoyed preferential treatment since the pre-perestroyka era, the presidential candidate took the floor to address students and teachers at the Ryazan Agricultural Academy, located on the city's outskirts and considered by Ryazan's residents as one of the oblast's most conservative schools; afterward, having moved elsewhere on the outskirts, he addressed proletarian masses at a machine-tool plant's house of culture.

His comparatively soft rhetoric with regard to the incumbent president ("I did not expect Boris Nikolayevich so swiftly to get down to executing the State Duma's resolution") enabled Zyuganov virtually without hindrance to get 30 minutes live on the local television channel, beamed also to Tambov and Lipetsk. Gennadiy Andreyevich gave the CPRF's Duma faction credit for the just-signed agreement of the "Group of Four," dropping a one-liner even though it was somewhat at odds with arithmetic: "The country cannot be either split — or united — three ways."

With the run-up to the local elections scheduled for 7 April, Gennadiy Andreyevich's campaign tour was most opportune. The CPRF leader himself mentioned aloud yet another figure: The Communists' electorate in Ryazan will double.

There was no one to take issue with that.

The oblast that presidential candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov has been visiting lives a life of austerity. The Communist leader's namesake — Administration Chief Gennadiy Merkulov — was appointed to the post from the position of Ryazan's deputy mayor in January 1994. The first thing he did was to cancel elections for the heads of administration of lower rank that had already been announced by his predecessor; since then Merkulov has been keeping a tight rein on the single executive hierarchy, pursuing a policy of "depressed stabilization" (to give no money to anybody and to make everything possible to make ends meet in the local budget). The oblast remains one of the federal budget's few donors, and the local authorities are trying hard to follow this tradition.

Signs of economic growth in a number of Ryazan's industries have been accompanied by a drastic plunge in most people's living standards; meanwhile, the gap between local incomes and prices reaching Moscow's levels is widening rapidly. Gubernatorial elections are expected in December 1996; the oblast legislature's term of office has been artificially extended.

The city, which had "Russia's most democratic city council" five years ago, now appears poised to elect the most pro-Communist one — provided, of course, there is the requisite quorum to deem the elections to be valid. In the meantime, no representative of the democratic public was seen in the audiences addressed by the CPRF leader or in the picketing lines that welcomed him.

Russia: KRO, Others Gather Over 2 Million Signatures Backing Lebed

MK0304110096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Igor Korotchenko: "Lebed Collects Signatures"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sheets with signatures in support of Aleksandr Lebed's nomination to the post of Russian Federation president brought to Moscow contain more than 2 million voters' signatures. NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA has learned this from a well-informed source with the campaign headquarters of the former commander of the 14th Army. Currently under way is the systematization of the signature sheets, which, upon completion of procedures required by law, will be turned over to the Central Electoral Commission this week. The brunt of the signature-collection work fell on three structures: the Democratic Party of Russia, Congress of Russian Communities [KRO], and the "Honor and Motherland" movement. According to a member of General Lebed's [campaign] staff, more than 70 percent of KRO's regional structures worked for Lebed despite Yuriy Skokov's ban.

Russia: Seleznev Discusses Duma Resolution, Elections, CPRF

WS0204143596 Warsaw TRYBUNA in Polish 1 Apr 96 p 7

[Interview with Russian State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev, by Krzysztof Pilawski in Moscow; date not given: "The Parliament Is Better Than the President"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Pilawski] **The resolutions passed by the Duma read that, unlike the results of the March 1991 referendum on the preservation of the Soviet Union, the Belovezhskaya agreements on the liquidation of the Soviet Union are not legally binding. You say, in turn, that resolutions passed by the Duma are not binding because the are only "moral-political" documents. Would you explain this and tell us what the situation is really like?**

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[Seleznev] The Duma is entitled to pass not only laws but also resolutions, which are moral-political in nature and in which the deputies express their attitude on a given issue. The deputies declared that the decision to liquidate the Soviet Union was a violation of the law which was in force at that time — the Constitution of the Soviet Union. I do not understand the hue and cry that was raised over these resolutions. Why were things quiet when the Duma passed a resolution to condemn the war in Chechnya; after all, the resolution was moral-political in nature as well.

[Pilawski] **President Boris Yeltsin accused the Duma of undermining Russia's legal status....**

[Seleznev] The legal status of the Russian Federation was not in any respect called into question; the same goes for the legal status of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. After all, many national leaders, including your president, said that resolutions passed by the Duma are not legally binding. The Soviet Union cannot be restored by means of resolutions adopted by the Duma.

[Pilawski] **Why, then, did you pass on documents which were so controversial?**

[Seleznev] We did it to pave the way for the president and the government regarding the integration of the former Soviet Republics; we wanted to encourage them to take more specific actions. The Duma signalled that it would quickly ratify integration documents.

[Pilawski] **What do you mean when you say the word "integration?"**

[Seleznev] I primarily mean economic integration, but not only that. After all, at the time when the agreements on the establishment of the CIS were being signed, it was envisioned that there would be common borders and money, that there would be cultural closeness, etc. Nothing remains of this. It sometimes happens that in some of the former Soviet republics university diplomas from the neighboring countries are not honored. Unification of the former Soviet republics is not up to presidents or parliaments. In each individual case the decision should be made by the people in a referendum.

[Pilawski] **Critics of the Duma argued that the resolutions on the "revival of the Soviet Union" was a present for those Central and East European countries, which gained a new argument in favor of their integration with NATO. You talked to Javier Solana. Did you discuss the resolutions?**

[Seleznev] We did not discuss them at all. The NATO-expansion procedure is difficult and it takes time. It is nonsensical to claim that a resolution of the Russian Duma can significantly speed up the process. We are not entitled to tell anyone things like: do not join NATO. This is an affair of individual states, which decide what is and what is not favorable to them. Our stand remains unchanged: we do not want NATO's forces to draw closer to our borders. This is the president's opinion, which is also shared by deputies opposed to him.

[Pilawski] **On several occasions, you mentioned the possibility of prolonging Boris Yeltsin's term on condition that he launches an initiative to amend the Constitution. The main purpose of those amendments: liquidation of the office of the president. Is this proposal still valid?**

[Seleznev] It was not a proposal; it was a forecast. In order to put it into effect, Boris Yeltsin should submit draft amendments to the Constitution, remove all the articles concerning the president, and include articles saying that Russia is a parliamentary republic.

[Pilawski] **Would the Duma endorse Yeltsin if he submitted such a draft document?**

[Seleznev] A great many deputies believe that the best political system in Russia would be the parliamentary, not presidential, republic. However, amendments to the Constitution cannot be made unless there is support from least two-thirds of the Duma and the Federation Council, as well as from two-thirds of the federation's members.

[Pilawski] **The Communist Party of the Russian Federation [CPRF] traditionally favored liquidation of the office of the president. Will Zyuganov give up the presidency if he wins the elections?**

[Seleznev] I believe that he will propose a new constitution because the current one is by and large imperfect. Even its supporters admit that it has many gaps.

[Pilawski] **They are afraid that the Constitution, which was drawn up for Yeltsin, will be used by Zyuganov, who will have a lot of power...**

[Seleznev] Exactly, this Constitution perfectly satisfies Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, for instance, who supports it wholeheartedly. Zyuganov wants a "soft" constitution, one which would limit the president's powers. Our party is launching an initiative to pass a special law on the president which would specify in detail the rights and the duties of the head of state.

[Pilawski] **How do you estimate Zyuganov's chances in the elections?**

[Seleznev] If the peasant-patriotic coalition which we are forming continues to broaden, then I do not rule out that Zyuganov will win in the first round.

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[Pilawski] **Even though the coalition accord has been signed by many parties and organizations, I cannot help getting the impression that you have not gone beyond the traditional opposition circles. The groups centered around Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, Svyatoslav Fedorov, or Mikhail Gorbachev do not intend to back Zyuganov, although they declare that they will not vote for Yeltsin, either.**

[Seleznev] If Zyuganov does not win in the first round, then — I am convinced — many supporters of Yavlinskiy, Gorbachev, and Fedorov will vote for Zyuganov in the run-off.

[Pilawski] **At the beginning of this term of parliament, there was talk of an alliance between the communists and Yavlinskiy in the Duma. Will Zyuganov entrust Yavlinskiy with the mission of forming a government if he wins the elections?**

[Seleznev] No, he will not because Yavlinskiy has publicly announced his fundamental differences with the communists. He is a man of principle, so he would not accept such an offer. However, we want to form a government of civil agreement, in which qualifications, not party membership, will really count.

[Pilawski] **The image of Zyuganov as a social democrat was reinforced abroad, especially after the Davos meeting. How real is this image, do you think?**

[Seleznev] The people who are called social democrats in Russia are Aleksander Yakovlev and Gavril Popov. Each of them has set up an insignificant social democratic party. These figures are very unpopular in our society, and for this reason the words social democracy do not call up very good memories in Russia. Now, Western social democratic parties are typically parliamentary groups. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation looks upon the parliamentary elections as only a part of its entire activity. We attach great importance to the construction of an organizationally strong party. Now, as far as our platform is concerned, I can see many similarities in such issues as the attitude toward the economy, to the human being, and to the problems of the modern world.

[Pilawski] **General Varennikov claims that Zyuganov only pretends to be a social democrat. According to him, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation has a clandestine maximum program which has nothing to do with social democracy.**

[Seleznev] We published our maximum program a year and a half ago. Zyuganov was taken aback by Varennikov's statement. We do not have any clandestine programs.

[Pilawski] **People such as Varennikov, old politicians of the former epoch, are quite numerous in your party. Is this not an obstacle for you?**

[Seleznev] I do not think that we must give them up. On the other hand, they must face the new reality. One cannot go forward with one's head looking backward.

[Pilawski] **There will be no return to the old system if Zyuganov wins the elections?**

[Seleznev] This is an old topic. Of course not.

[Pilawski] **One can hear opinions in the Federation Council that, as a result of your resolutions, the presidential elections should be postponed to a later time. Does such a possibility exist?**

[Seleznev] Some of the heads of the regions, who have been appointed by the president and who are members of the Federation Council, like the current situation very much and they do not need any elections. However, the elections will be held because otherwise the president would brutally violate the Constitution. There is nothing that could justify such a decision. Even Boris Yeltsin's supporters would not back it.

Russia: Panskov Views Fiscal Aspect of Accord With Belarus

LD0204170596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1520 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 2 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Finance Minister Viktor Panskov called the Russia-Belarus integration pact a breakthrough.

"I would not make far-fetched conclusions today, for example about the setting up of a common budget. The budgets of each sovereign state will be independent," he said in an interview with Itar-Tass today.

"But the budget of the union is emerging, common for our states, which will consist of deductions on an at par basis from the budgets of Russia and Belarus," Panskov said.

The budgetary aspect of the integration could be taken further, he continued, spelling that major production projects could be handled jointly by Russia and Belarus.

With the integration pact in place, it will be easier for the two states to handle their own problems.

"There will be less spending and more business," Panskov said.

Elaborating on the large projects to be funded by the fresh union's budget, Panskov cited as a priority the programme to manage the consequences of the 1986

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Chernobyl nuclear accident which affected downwind Belarusian and Russian regions.

Panskov said he would welcome the idea of Ukraine's joining the new union. He said there had been preliminary contacts with Ukraine over that, but "it so far has a very cautious attitude to the creation of the community by Russia and Belarus. They (Ukraine) are more guided by politics than by the economy," Panskov said.

Russia: Yeltsin, CPRF Integration Visions Contrasted

MM0204134696 Moscow TRUD in Russian 2 Apr 96 pp 1, 2

["Commentary of the Day" by Nikolay Dorofeyev: "Integration or 'Restoration'?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] No one today seems to be in doubt about the real point of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation's [CPRF] maneuvers surrounding the topic — painful to every post-Soviet citizen — of the collapse of the Union and the possibilities for its reunification. There are no naive people to be found among the leaders and the main tier of Communist Party functionaries, and they realize that the country will not be recreated simply by pressing the voting button in parliament. But political maneuvering around the integration topic basically in pursuit of electoral interests is another matter — profit may be made here.

Particularly as the background is propitious. Having swallowed their semi-starvation ration of independence and really suffering from the rupture of economic and social ties, the peoples have energetically reached out to one another. And those on the crest of the integration wave are guaranteed political dividends. How is it possible to be sidelined in such a situation....

All serious political forces in Russia are concerned today with a search for ways to speed up rapprochement with the countries of the former Union. But the greatest attention is, naturally, focused now on what the current Russian leadership is **doing** in this regard and what its main opponent — the CPRF — is **declaring**. It is worthwhile considering why people in the countries of the former Union and indeed in the world are reacting, if not enthusiastically, then at least with understanding and interest to the process of, let us call it notionally, "Yeltsin-style" integration while reacting at the same time with consternation and even indignation to the declarations geared one way or another toward recreating the USSR, even if in a renewed "Zyuganov-style" form. And yet the same noble undertaking would seem to be involved here: the rapprochement of once fraternal peoples now divided by borders. Everyone wants this except perhaps the rabid nationalists (whether "left" or "right"). But let us recall at least the wave of high emotions generated over one-sixth of the earth's land area immediately after the Russian Duma's adoption on 15 March of its well-known decision on the de facto denunciation of the Belovezhskaya agreements....

Judging by numerous signs, the present Russian authorities are not trying to force rapprochement on anyone from the countries of the former Union, although the Kremlin does have, as it were, levers of economic and political influence at its disposal. I heard the following description of the current stage of the integration process from one of the Russian Federation president's closest aides: the unification of free states to the extent to which they wish and are ready.

Approximately this approach has already led to the signing of the quadripartite treaty among Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia, which took place 29 March. With the aim of creating a future Community of Integrated States the sides resolved to direct their joint efforts toward deepening integration by stages. They agreed to pursue with vigor the formation of a single economic area providing for the effective functioning of a common market in goods, services, capital, and labor and the development of common transport, power supply, and information systems. The sides will complete the creation of a single customs area before this year is out and introduce a common currency in subsequent stages in line with the degree of integration achieved. Specific ways of cooperating in the social and cultural spheres and in the field of law enforcement activity are planned. Joint bodies for integration management are being set up to achieve the set aims. And no one is dotting the "i's" in this noble undertaking. The treaty among the four is open, and other states can join it. This is merely the first step. The signing of a separate treaty on deep integration between Belarus and Russia is planned today.

This pretty flexible and meaningful integration formula has proved opportune to the politicians and leaders of states who are keen really to concert their efforts and who consider the extent to which public awareness and the economic situation in their countries enable them to work toward rapprochement with Russia and one another. This formula, while not offending the dignity of the peoples, enables them to preserve their statehood while possessing that customary sense of being a part of a larger entity. And it is precisely this which essentially all of us former citizens of the USSR lack today.

Everything is simpler and starker for the Communists. The term "integration" is not in vogue here. The CPRF program adopted in January bluntly states that the Communist Party will seek to "revoke the Belovezhskaya

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agreements and restore a single union state on a voluntary, stage-by-stage basis." Let us stress that this is not a union or an association but a single state. A renewed Union, as the CPRF leaders like to put it. It is not being spelled out by any of them anywhere how this "voluntary" and "stage-by-stage" reconstruction will proceed if they come to power. Given our still fresh memory of the past, we can merely infer what methods may be used. And what kind of "renewed Union" will come about as a result — the Communists are staying silent about that for the time being.

It may be thought that the citizens of the former USSR are faced with a problem of choice, as it were: A return to a thinly disguised renewed model of a unitary state or a return to a free democratic community. However, that choice has, I think, already been made in fact....

Russia: Malashenko: NTV Not To Conduct Pro-Yeltsin Campaign

MM0204135096 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96

[Report by Anna Kozyreva on telephone interview with NTV President Igor Malashenko; date not given: "Igor Malashenko's Results and Beginning"; from the "Home and Homeland" 30 Mar-5 Apr section, p 1]

[FBIS Translated Text] The news that Igor Malashenko, one of the leaders of the NTV television company, has joined the council of the election campaign to reelect the incumbent president of Russia came as a bit of a surprise to many people.

When asked "Who invited you to join the council?" Igor Yevgenyevich replied:

[Malashenko] The invitation came from Boris Nikolayevich personally.

[Kozyreva] Does this mean that from now on NTV will be conducting a campaign to support Yeltsin?"

[Malashenko] Not at all. The invitation was made to Igor Malashenko as a private individual and not as the leader of a well-known television company. NTV will continue to cover all the events taking place in the same way as it has been covering them. In no way do I head the NTV news service. This is headed by Oleg Dobrodeyev. But I will not be influencing it or forcing it to do anything.

[Kozyreva] In that case how exactly will your participation in the council manifest itself?

[Malashenko] My function is just to give advice on how best to work with the mass media.

[Kozyreva] What are the council's overall objectives?

[Malashenko] You see, this council is not an executive organ at all. And it operates on a voluntary basis. We discuss problems, which would seem to be a good thing to do during an election campaign.

[Kozyreva] What exactly, if it is not a secret?

[Malashenko] It is indeed a secret, plans cannot be revealed to the various candidates.

[Kozyreva] Can you give some sort of assessment of the ongoing presidential campaign?

[Malashenko] As you would expect, in such a big country as ours the beginning has so far been fairly chaotic. There is confusion but there is also excitement, spirit, and, as the British say, there is "drive."

[Kozyreva] And fervor?

[Malashenko] That word is not in my vocabulary. I wish Mr. Zyuganov fervor and vigor in his campaign.

[Kozyreva] Is NTV planning to hold election debates between the candidates?

[Malashenko] We are interested in holding such televised debates. But this will depend largely on what the situation is in the near future. I am not sure whether Boris Nikolayevich wants to participate. And indeed this would be strange. I reckon that in any country the incumbent president would refuse to engage in polemics with little-known candidates for this post.

[Kozyreva] Recently there was a report that there would be no presidential election advertisements on commercial television.

[Malashenko] As yet this utterance is not necessarily true. As yet, evidently, this is a mere intention.

[Kozyreva] What is your prediction: Who will get through to the second round?

[Malashenko] I am being not at all original. I believe that the contenders in the second round will be Boris Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov.

Media Issues

Russia: VGTRK Chairman Cited on Reorganization, Campaign Role

MM0204100196 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Irina Petrovskaya: "Sagalayev Initiating Cadre and Other Changes in RTR [Russian Television and Radio]"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Wednesday evening [27 March] Eduard Sagalayev held his first informal meeting with journalists of Moscow's leading publications

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after his appointment to the post of chairman of the All-Russia State Television and Radio Company [VGTRK]. The leader of the second channel spoke over coffee and sandwiches to this fairly narrow group about what he had managed to do during his six weeks in the post and about what the future holds.

Despite promising not to make any radical changes at the channel, he has, however, already taken a series of steps designed to fundamentally reorganize the company's management system: He has gotten rid of several chiefs, appointed new ones, combined three unwieldy sister associations within a single organization, and begun staff cuts. According to Sagalayev, the VGTRK's problem does not lie in a lack of budget funding — used judiciously there would be sufficient for as many as 15 channels — but in its obsolete, ineffective management structure with its great number of meaningless rules.

It transpires that the company, formed in 1990 as a most democratic and progressive company, has turned into a museum piece of the stagnation period. Here it is impossible to make the simplest of decisions — it is necessary to have them cleared with many offices, which in turn are bound by absurd norms. For example, the VGTRK chairman cannot give Svetlana Sorokina a raise — the RTV [Russian Television and Radio] "star" receives 400,000 rubles [R]. With bonuses her pay reaches R1 million. "And you want 'Vesti' to compete with NTV [Independent Television] under these circumstances?" Sagalayev's "proteges" Flyarkovskiy and Gurnov, who are soon returning from whence they came, ask him.

Sagalayev really does want to compete, which is why he is inviting into the company people versed in management science and modern financial mechanisms and with a taste for and experience of working both in state and commercial television. One of the goals of the company's restructuring is, in the words of its director, for it to pay its way completely, and to direct the advertising revenue into creating programs that promote national culture, literature, cinema, and theater. An association is being created within the VGTRK to produce its own television films — both feature films and documentaries, so as to avoid buying them in. Today this unique area of Russian television is in complete decline.

Eduard Sagalayev told journalists what wishes the president had expressed with regard to the second channel. First, we must show more provincial life on television. Second, news and comment programs should not drive viewers to despair at the large quantity of rubbish, which was the reason for Oleg Poptsov's departure from office. When Sagalayev asked for clarification of the term "rubbish," it was explained to him that this means reportages on Chechnya and improper behavior which in no way reflect the positive processes taking place in Russia today in the fields of science and culture, in the economy, and people's lives. The VGTRK chairman agreed in principle: When an entire program consists of politics, this is evidence of there being something wrong with the news service.

Of course, the subject that has engendered most interest among journalists is the coming elections. "To a certain degree, I agreed to join the second channel because I think that in this particular position and at this time I will be able to have an influence on Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin through direct contact and television programs, helping him not just to stay in power but to realize what is sensible in his opponents' programs as well. Which is why his opponents — the Communists and national-patriots — must definitely be shown on state television, although there can be no question of their being given the same opportunities as the president: Today the channels are openly in favor of the president. It is television's job to convince both the electorate and Yeltsin's political opponents that his presidency is the guarantee of the freedom both of Communists and nonparty people."

Eduard Sagalayev does not agree that state television is incapable of mounting an effective election campaign, which is precisely why Yeltsin invited NTV President Igor Malashenko to join his consultants: "It is clear that state television will indeed do what the president requires. By inviting Malashenko the president is accomplishing another task — that of making allies not only of an independent television company and its intelligent and professional leader, but also of the powerful financial group backing NTV."

Military & Nuclear Issues

Russia: New Cossack Chief Has Military Counterintelligence Past

MK0304105996 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[INTERFAX report: "Counterintelligence Man Turns Cossack"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General Anatoliy Semenov, chief of the Main Directorate of Cossack Forces under the Russian Federation president, appointed to this position by an edict of Boris Yeltsin on Monday [1 April], was in charge of an FSK [Federal Counterintelligence Service] directorate for combating terrorism until midsummer 1995. This was announced in the main staff of the Cossack Forces of Russia and Abroad yesterday.

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Mr. Semenov finished a military school and served with the troops. Then he went over to join military intelligence organs, where he worked for nearly two decades. After the Directorate for Combating Terrorism was created in the FSK system, Mr. Semenov left the position of Military Intelligence Directorate deputy chief for the position of chief of the Directorate for Combating Terrorism (predecessor of today's FSB Antiterrorist Center). Igor Agarkov, first deputy chief of the Cossack Forces Main Directorate, stated yesterday that "it has become imperative today to revive the historical traditions that existed in the great Russian state for many centuries." In his view, "Russian Cossacks formed the basis and support of the great power [derzhava] and always rose to defend it." He said he had not personally met Mr. Semenov yet, but he knows that he "is a remarkable person and specialist."

Russia: Yeltsin Appoints Primakov Head of Nuclear Security Body

LD0304072096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0712 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin today signed a decree relieving at his request Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Oleg Lobov of his duties as chairman of the organising committee of the meeting of the eight heads of state on nuclear security.

Lobov will be replaced with Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Yevgeniy Primakov.

The Group of Eight summit is due to be held in Moscow on April 19 and 20.

Russia: Government Allocates R16.4 Billion to Chernobyl Victims

MM0204151296 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Sergey Taranov: "Anniversary Money for Chernobyl Victims"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Government is allocating 16.4 billion rubles [R] to mark the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. Invalids and families who have lost their breadwinner as a result of the accident at the nuclear power plant will receive one-shot payments equivalent to six and eight times the minimum wage respectively. A total of R25 billion will be transferred to regions of Russia to cover the cost of medical aid, medicines, and free treatment for citizens exposed to the effects of radiation. A further R10 billion is earmarked to improve the health of children from affected regions during the summer holidays.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Chernomyrdin To Report to Duma on State Budget

LD0304110496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1029 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is to account to a plenary meeting of the State Duma about the fulfilment of the federal budget in the first quarter of the current year. As many as 283 deputies voted for this proposal tabled by deputy Gennadiy Kulikov. One deputy was against and there were six abstentions. Speaker of the State Duma Gennadiy Seleznev said deputies' idea to hear the account of the Cabinet chief should be implemented in the current month.

Deputies also decided to ask the Accounting Chamber of the Russian Federation and the Budget Committee to find out and inform the house from what funds wage arrears were currently being repaid in Russian regions.

MPs also decided to ask from the Central Electoral Commission a written report about facts of violations of legislation during the election to the State Duma on December 17, 1995. Speaker of the Duma Seleznev noted that if the written report did not satisfy MPs, it would be necessary to invite Nikolay Ryabov, the Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, to the Duma.

Russia: Duma's Mironov Criticizes Yeltsin's 'Legal System' Bill

MK0304110196 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Ivan Rodin: "It Has Been Decided To Turn Down President's Initiative"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The draft law submitted by the president compromises both himself and those who drafted it. From the legal point of view, it has many flaws, and from the political point of view, it may simply entail unpredictable consequences," pointed out Oleg Mironov, CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] member of the Duma committee on legislation and judicial-legal reform, commenting on the situation surrounding the draft law "On Guaranteeing the Stability of the Russian Federation Legal System and Confirming Russia's International Obligations."

Oleg Mironov confirmed that the legislation committee recommended that this draft law should not even pass the first reading because its concept contravenes

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the Constitution. Incidentally, a majority of Duma committee jurists, who are members of different factions, agreed with this assessment. In their view, the State Duma's jurisdiction, strictly defined in the Constitution, does not provide for the right to confirm either the operation of regulatory documents inside Russia, or of international agreements, something the draft law initiated by the president suggests that the Duma should do.

Furthermore, Mr. Mironov pointed out, the preamble of the draft contains "inappropriate and unrealistic expressions directed at the Duma." He has in mind the claim that the 15 March Duma decision rendered uncertain the constitutional and legal basis of all decisions made by it. In the lawmaker's opinion, the most dignified way out for the president would be to recall his legislative initiative. Oleg Mironov would not give his ideas on why the draft law is so imperfect from the legal point of view, while it is not ruled out that this may be caused, firstly, by haste, and secondly, because it was necessary to express in some concrete way the negative reaction to "the anti-Belovezhskaya Pushcha" decrees of the State Duma.

It is most unlikely that the lower house will consider the president's draft law today, because the Duma international and CIS affairs committees have not sent in their decisions regarding it. They will, perhaps, meet on Thursday. However, even if the document is after all submitted for the Duma's verdict, its future is already clear today; that is, such a piece of legislation will not be on the roster of the Duma's achievements.

Incidentally, Oleg Mironov would not answer your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent's question on whether there may be any sharp reaction on the part of the presidential structures in the event the Duma throws out the president's initiative. He only remarked that "one would not like to get a negative reaction, because we are lawmakers, we act in accordance with the Constitution and we want legal cleanliness."

Russia: Legislative, Regulatory Documents 24-30 Mar

96P50068A

[FBIS Report] The following is a listing of Russian legislation recently published in the press of the Russian Federation compiled by FBIS. Numbers within parentheses indicate approximate wordage. Entries followed by the notation "Text" have been translated into English and are available in FBIS publications.

SECTION I: ECONOMIC LEGISLATION (EXPORT-IMPORT, BANKING, PRIVATIZATION, AUCTIONS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

Government 28 February Decree No. 188 Granting Investment Tax Credit To Novorossiysk, Plus Udachin Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (300/600)

Government 28 February Decree No. 215 Ratifying Procedure For Mineral Prospecting Enterprises' Reporting Activities, Accounts To State Authorities (SO), Plus Associated Procedure. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 6) (1400)

Government 28 February Directive No. 279 Approving Plans To Support High-Tech Export-Oriented Industries. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 6) (250)

Government 6 March Decree No. 244 On Implementing Stockraising Inspectorate Law (300), Plus Aleksandr Gavrilyuk Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 6) (700)

Government 6 March Directive No. 332 On Holding Of All-Russia Conference Of Construction Organizations And Construction Industry Workers 29-30 March In Moscow. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (200)

RF Government 11 March Decree No. 267 On Measures To Provide Moscow With Food In 1996. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Mar 96 p 7) (1000) (Text)

Government 12 March Directive No. 365 Approving State Loans To Textile Industry. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 6) (150) State Duma 13 March Decree No. 141-ii Rejecting Federation Council Decree Which Rejected Duma-Passed Pensions Law, Adopting Said Law In Accordance With Part 5 Of Article 105 Of The Constitution. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 6) (150)

Government 15 March Decree No. 278 On Regulations For Importing Narcotics, Poisons (150) With Associated Statute (700). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5)

Yeltsin 15 March Edict No. 382 Approving Appended Statute On Russian Federation Ministry Of Transport. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 5) (700/3300) (Text) (964E0874)

Government 16 March Decree No. 248 Introducing Amendments To Statute On Interdepartmental Commission For Regulating Questions Concerning Use Of Oil Pipelines And Oil Terminals For The Export Of Oil And

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Oil Products. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (800)

Government 16 March Decree No. 282 Approving (Unpublished) Statute On Interdepartmental Commission To Implement Federal Program For Economic, Social Development Of Mordova. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5) (120)

Government 16 March Decree No. 283 On Financing Procurement Of Raw Sugar In 1996. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Government 16 March Decree No. 288 Deeming As Lapsed Earlier Government Decisions On Social Protection Of Invalids. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (250)

Government 16 March Decree No. 291 Approving Appended Statute On Procedure For Export, Import Of Radioactive Materials, Products. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (500/1400) (Text)

Government 16 March Directive No. 391 On Submission To State Duma Of Draft Law Amending Law On 1996 Federal Budget, Appointing Deputy Interior Minister Durbazhev Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (100)

Government 16 March Directive No. 394 On Submission To State Duma Of Draft Law Amending Federal Law On Highways, Appointing Deputy Minister Of Finance Shatalov Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (150)

Government 16 March Directive No. 398 On Submission Of Draft Amendments To Law On State Pension To State Duma, Appointing Deputy Minister Of Labor Katulskiy As Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (100)

Government 20 March Decree No. 308 Altering Membership Of Commission On Finance, Credit Policy. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5) (300) (Text)

Yeltsin 20 March Edict No. 399 Extending Term For Which Gazprom Shares Will Remain Federal Property. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (100)

Government 21 March Decree No. 309 On Practical Implementation Of 1996 Budget. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 4) (3200) (Text)

Government 21 March Directive No. 407 Ordering Tax Inspectorate To Investigate Companies Owing Large Amounts In Taxes, With List Of (Mainly Energy-Sphere) Companies Involved. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 1) (200)

Yeltsin 21 March Edict No. 404 Deeming As Lapsed Edict No. 660 Of 23 June 1992 On Management Of Railroad Transport Enterprises. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (150)

Yeltsin 21 March Edict No. 405 Deeming As Lapsed Edict No. 1930 Of 17 September 1994 On State Customs Duty. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (100)

Yeltsin 21 March Edict No. 408 Approving Appended Comprehensive Program Of Measures To Protect The Rights Of Investors And Stockholders. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4) (300/4000)

Yeltsin 22 March Edict No. 413 On Amendments And Additions To Edict No. 2063 Of 4 November On State Regulation Of Securities Market In Russian Federation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 5) (500)

RF Government 23 March Decree No. 329 On Granting Additional Financial Aid To Federation Components To Acquire Federal Set Of Textbooks. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 1) (200)

SECTION II: POLITICAL (INTERNATIONAL AND CIS AFFAIRS, ELECTIONS, CRIME, POLLUTION)

Government 6 January Decree No. 238 Approving Protocol On Agreement With France About Provisions Of Credit Up To FFr1.5 Billion. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Government 19 February Decree No. 155 Approving Appended (But Not Published) Russian Federation Government Action Plan For Environmental Protection And Use Of Natural Resources In 1996-1997, Plus Smolyakova Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (200/700)

Government 28 February Decree No. 216 Approving Appended (But Not Published) List Of Priority Measures In 1996-1998 For Solving Problem Of Waste In Russian Federation, Plus Smolyakova Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (300/600)

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Government 28 February Directive No. 285 Agreeing To Modernization Of Three Moscow Apartment Blocks For Eventual Use Of Supreme Court And Government Agency Employees. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 6) (100)

Government 6 March Decree No. 258 On Measures To Implement Presidential Edict No. 1343 Of 31 December 1995 On Abolition Of Customs Control Along Border With Kazakhstan. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 6) (1400)

Government 6 March Decree No. 260 Approving Appended List Of Articles Which Are Banned From Being Sent By Mail, Together With Procedure For Confiscation And Destruction Of Such Articles. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (100/100/400)

Government 12 March Decree No. 271 On Amendments And Additions To Law On Appeals Against Actions And Decisions Infringing Citizens' Rights And Freedoms. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 6) (600)

Duma 13 March Decree No. 142-ii Rejecting (Unspecified) Federation Council Amendments To Criminal Codes. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5) (120)

Government 13 March Directive No. 376 Approving April 1996 Rome Seminar On 'Technology From Russia' (350) Plus List Of Organizing Committee Members (200) Plus Aleksandr Linkov Commentary (800). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5)

Yeltsin 14 March Edict No. 381 On Earlier Presidential Decisions Now Rescinded, Plus List Of Edicts, Other Documents Or Parts Of Them Affected. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 6) (600)

Government 16 March Decree No. 281 Appointing New Members To State Commission For Demarcation Of Ingushetia-Chechnya Borders And Approving Appended Statute Of This Commission. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 5) (300/1000)

Government 16 March Decree No. 287 Approving Trade And Economic Cooperation Agreement With Lebanon And Submitting It For Duma's Ratification, Appointing Vice Premier Davydov As Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (150)

Government 16 March Decree No. 289 Deeming As Lapsed Earlier Government Decisions On TV Broadcasting. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (350)

Government 16 March Decree No. 292 Approving Double Taxation Convention With Belgium And Submitting It For Duma's Ratification. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 6) (100)

Government 16 March Decree No. 293 On Russia's Participation In 3rd International Technical Experiment By Disarmament Conference Group Of Experts. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4) (800) (Text)

Yeltsin 16 March Directive No. 131 Appointing New Members Of Coordination Commission For Resolving Differences On Russian Federation Criminal Code. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 5) (300)

Government 16 March Directive No. 386 On 2nd UNESCO Congress On Education And Information Technology. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (200)

Yeltsin 16 March Edict No. 383 On Presidential Main Control Administration (200), Plus Associated Statute On Its Functions. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 6) (600)

Government 20 March Decree No. 307 On Government Coordination, Consultative Bodies. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5) (1000) (Text)

Yeltsin 20 March Edict No. 401 On Additional Measures To Provide Backup For The Activity Of Russian Federation Courts. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (600)

Yeltsin 21 March Edict No. 403 Approving Appended Statute On State Heraldry Register. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (100/600)

Yeltsin 22 March Decree No. 415 Setting Up Presidential Council For Collaboration With Military Veterans, Reservists Under Air Marshal Yef imov, Plus Associated Statute. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 4) (850) (Text)

Yeltsin 23 March Edict No. 420 On Elaboration Of 'Own Home' Targeted Federal Program, Plus Commentary By Presidential Aid Livshits. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (600/600)

Additions And Amendments To List Of Full And Abbreviated Names Of Ministries And Other Organs Of

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Executive Power. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (150)

SECTION III: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Government 6 January Decree No. 261 On Closure Of Center For New Medical And Specialized Technologies. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Government 28 February Decree No. 221 On HIV Certification For People In Prison (100) Plus Irina Krasnopolskaya Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5) (500) (Text)

Government 28 February Directive No. 300 Approving Appended (But Not Published) Plan For Drafting Legislative And Other Normative Acts In Implementation Of Federal Law On Geodesy And Cartography, Plus Sharov Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (150/700)

Government 16 March Decree No. 285 Adding P.P. Syutkin To, And Removing A.D. Kuntsevich From, Composition Of Government Commission For Selection Of Regions For Siting Facilities For Destruction Of Chemical Weapons. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3) (200)

Government 16 March Decree No. 290 On Setting Up 'Novosibirsk' Science And Technology Park. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Government 20 March Decree No. 296 On Reorganization Of Academy Of Medical Sciences Cardiology Scientific Center. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5) (500)

Regional Affairs

Russia: U.S.-Funded Apartments for Reserve Servicemen Commissioned

MM0204144896 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Valeriy Sikorskiy under the "News" rubric: "They Are Already Moving Into the 'U.S.' Block..."]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kaliningrad — A 115-apartment block for Russian Armed Forces servicemen discharged into the reserve from the Baltic countries has been commissioned in the city of Zelenogradsk, Kaliningrad Oblast. It has been built with funds allocated by the United States in accordance with an agreement concluded between the Russian Government and the U.S. Administration three years ago. This block is the seventh of the planned new construction projects.

The construction order was placed by the U.S. company of Ralf Partrons [name as transliterated], and the quality of construction and installation work was monitored by the firm of Skanska [name as transliterated] (Finland). The block was erected by workers of the "Kaliningradstroy" Joint-Stock Company, which took 13 months to do so. The handover ceremony was attended by representatives of the U.S. firm and the Finnish firm, who rated highly the quality of the Russian builders' work. The apartments meet European standard requirements. The first to receive [housing] vouchers were Colonel O. Nikolayev, retired; Captain Second Rank S. Kuznetsov, reserve; and Captain Third Rank F. Kovalev, reserve.

Russia: Spent Nuclear Fuel Dumped at Classified Sites

LD0304111896 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 0800 GMT 3 Apr 96

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Journalists of Russian Public Television have for the first time gained access to one of the superclassified sites of the Northern Fleet. Spent nuclear fuel from nuclear submarines has been dumped here for more than 30 years.

[video shows nuclear dump] Journalists were invited to the Andreyeva Guba site above all in order to attract public attention to the disastrous situation in this area used for dumping nuclear waste. About 4,000 cubic meters of solid spent fuel are stored here at present. The dump is completely full. It will take at least 15 years to transport all this to the Mayak enterprise. But the fleet has no money for it.

Several years ago, not far from here, they started to build a new dump. But it is being built at such a slow pace that its completion is a matter of some distant future. The radioactive levels at the Andreyeva Guba are 25 times greater than the norm. Literally one km from here the village of Zaozersk is situated. But according to the fleet command, the dump poses no danger. Yet, the journalists received no answer to their question why flowers began to bloom in this Transpolar region in March. If the flowers are blooming, let them bloom, they were told. Yet, the administration of Murmansk Region has declared this site a zone of environmental calamity. Admittedly, there are three such dumps in Murmansk region alone. And all of them are full beyond limit. The situation in other regions of the country is no better. The radioactive levels of the whole of the spent fuel being dumped today totals billions of curies. Such sites pose danger not only to Russia but also to neighbouring states. In particular, Norway is prepared

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to allocate funds for the recontruction of the site in (Lepsy), while the United States intends to provide our country and six other republics of the former USSR with $330 million to enable us to improve our nuclear safety systems and to build new dumps. Officially this decision will be announced at the special international conference on nuclear security to be held in Moscow on 19 April.

Russia: Northern Fleet Nuclear Dump Seen as 'Calamity'

LD0204203996 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, for the first time in the 30-year history of the superclassified site of the Northern Fleet, press representatives were allowed in there. Here is Aleksandra Mikhaylova with the details:

[Mikhaylova] The Andreyeva Guba site, where used nuclear fuel is stored from the nuclear reactors of Northern Fleet atomic submarines, dates back to 1957. By now, about 80 radioactive zones have developed in the dump areas, which are 100 percent full. [words indistinct] In order to remove all this, it is necessary, as the military say, to carry out revisions, that is, to assess the suitability of the dangerous freight for transportation to the areas where it can be put to industrial use. Incidentally, it will take more than 10 years to transport it, provided three to four specialized echelons a year are used for the purpose. It will probably be necessary to build a sarcophagus to store the hard radioactive waste, which is not suitable for transportation. [words indistinct] People live in barracks, right on the site, not because it is absolutely safe but because the state does not have the 65 billion rubles to build a housing development at the stipulated distance from the dump of three km. All this has given full rights to the regional administration to regard the Andreyeva Guba area as a zone of ecological calamity. This is Aleksandra Mikhaylova reporting from Murmansk.

Economic Issues

Russia: Soskovets Says Market Reforms Not To Be Abandoned

LD0304110996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1030 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — A senior minister said Russia's government would under no circumstances abandon market reforms but would seek to improve their social welfare aspect.

Positive trends are becoming increasingly manifest in the dynamics of prices for consumer goods and services, First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets told Interfax in an exclusive interview. Prices have gone up nine percent since the beginning of the year and rose 2.8 percent last month, increases which are less than one-quarter of those in the same periods last year, he said.

Yet "urgent measures, up to state regulation, are needed to ensure social support for the population," Soskovets said. He complained that last year real incomes slid by 13 percent. But today the situation is different, he said. In February this year real incomes were six percent up on February 1995.

Statistics for the first two months of 1996 show that the decrease in gross domestic product has slowed down, the minister continued. Domestic retail trade turnover has stabilized, foreign trade turnover is increasing, real wages are going up and housing construction is on the rise. The proportion of Russians with incomes below the subsistence level has dropped by 29 percent.

Price growth in the production sectors of the economy also considerably slowed down in 1995, Soskovets said. By the end of the year the average monthly increase in manufactured goods prices did not exceed two or three percent. During January and February 1996 the average price of materials and equipment bought by industrial manufacturers rose by about 3.5 percent.

Russia: Investments Continued Decline in 1995

MM0204142096 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Lyubov Sviridova: "Investments Remain a Sore Point in the Economy" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Russian State Committee for Statistics Data, investments in capital construction in 1995 fell by 13 percent compared with 1994 (in 1994 they fell by 24 percent compared with 1993). The indicator was affected by high inflation (130 percent), financial instability, the payments crisis, and also the drop in the population's income.

Enterprises and organizations in all forms of ownership assimilated, in all, 250 trillion rubles [R] in capital investments from all sources of funding, including investments by joint ventures and foreign firms. There was a drop in the amounts of capital investments in practically all regions. At the same time investments fell by more than 30 percent, for example, in Adygea, North Ossetia-Alania, and Ivanovo, Kaluga, Novosibirsk, and Kostroma Oblasts. An increase in investments was noted in Moscow, Stavropol Kray, and Volgograd, Belgorod, and Tyumen Oblasts. Analysis shows that enterprises' and organizations' own funds remain the main source of

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finance for capital investments (in 1995 these accounted for the assimilation of R156 trillion).

Fifty-six percent of all capital investments, i.e. R140 trillion, went into the construction, enlargement, modernization, and retooling of production facilities. The drop in investments in production construction compared with 1994 stood at 17 percent (33 percent in 1994 compared with 1993).

In 1995 over 800 projects and production capacities were commissioned from all sources of funding in the fuel and energy, metallurgical, chemical, food, and construction materials industries, transport, communications, and other sectors of the economy.

At the same time the planned commissioning of capacities for production of steel, finished rolled ferrous metals, cold rolled sheets, and coke, for processing of waste metal, and for extraction of iron ore, lead and zinc ore, and tungsten and molybdenum ore was not ensured.

Fulfillment of the Federal Investment Program in 1995 in industry, transport, and communications stood at 18 percent. Of 206 production projects under construction, 38 were commissioned. In the fuel industry and power generation one project was commissioned against the 11 envisaged in the program, in metallurgy one out of four, in transport and communications five out of 23, and in other sectors of industry 10 out of 120. Of the most important agro- industrial complex projects under construction in accordance with federal targeted programs, 61 were commissioned. Fulfillment of the start-up program did not exceed 9 percent.

Some R110 trillion was used in 1995 to develop the social sphere — 6 percent less than in 1994. Of the 68 most important projects under construction in the social complex receiving state support from federal budget funds on a nonreturnable basis, 12 were commissioned in 1995.

The results of building projects were not very comforting in health care (two out of 19 commissioned), science (two out of 24 projects commissioned to full capacity), or municipal construction (one out of seven built).

The results could not fail to be affected by circumstances in the sector itself. As of 1 December 1995, arrears to enterprises in the construction complex totaled R42.8 trillion, and 43 percent of them had been defaulted on. In December employees of construction enterprises did not receive timely payments to the tune of R637.2 billion (50 percent of the total funds calculated for payment, and other payments to enterprises' employees). Eleven construction organizations participated in strikes in 1995 (eight in 1994).

According to Russian State Committee for Statistics data, production of building bricks fell 5 percent. Production of reinforced concrete pressure pipes, soft roofing, insulation, plaster, porous fillers, and construction and industrial lime fell appreciably compared with 1994. Production of clinker cement, to which the "Housing" state program is geared, fell 8 percent, production of structures made from aluminum alloys fell 16 percent, that of light metal structures fell 47 percent, and that of prefabricated buildings (modules) made from them fell 60 percent. Prices of components and structures increased 180 percent. For example, there was a substantial increase in the prices of aggregate, ready-mix mortar, wood particle board (by 8-18 percent a month), etc. The prices of structural steel, die-rolled section reinforcement, prepared roofing paper, window glass, bitumens, and cast-iron pipes increased by 250 percent and more during the year.

Some R5,663 billion of capital investments in production and nonproduction projects were used during last year to restore and develop the economy and the social sphere in the Chechen Republic, including R5,528 billion from federal budget funds, or 98 percent of the total amount. Some R4,985 billion of capital investments were spent on rebuilding work, including R2,451 billion on rebuilding the housing stock, or 49 percent of such expenditure. During this period rebuilding work was carried out in apartment blocks with a total area of 3,006 million square meters, in general educational schools with 54,100 pupil places, in hospital establishments with 1,855 beds, and in health centers for 1,270 visits per shift.

The question of housing construction remains urgent in Russia. Some R64.8 trillion of capital investments were channeled into resolving the problem in 1995 (96 percent of the previous year against 82 percent in 1994). During the year enterprises and organizations in all forms of ownership built 658,000 apartments with a total area of 42.8 million square meters — 9 percent more than in 1994 — including 8.9 million square meters in rural localities (5 percent more).

Comparatively high rates of housing construction were noted in oblasts such as Voronezh, Tambov, Kemerovo, Belgorod, Astrakhan, and Volgograd and in the Karachayevo-Cherkess Republic. At the same time in some places (Perm, Ivanovo, Penza, and Kamchatka Oblasts and Maritime Kray) housing was commissioned at 60-70 percent of the 1994 level, and in Khakasia, North Ossetia-Alania, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Murmansk and Arkhangelsk Oblasts, for example, at just 40-60 percent.

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According to the data of a study conducted by the Russian State Committee for Statistics, incomplete housing construction in 1995 stood at a total area of 97 million square meters, i.e. 88,000 apartment blocks, not counting individual houses. Active work on selling incomplete projects to investors is continuing and, in particular, is designed to improve the situation in Tula, Bryansk, and Chelyabinsk Oblasts, the republics of Dagestan and Udmurtia, Stavropol Kray, and St. Petersburg.

Such a significant fact as the expanded construction of housing by enterprises in private ownership is noteworthy. In this way 15.3 million square meters of apartment blocks were commissioned last year (28 percent more than in 1994). Considerable progress has been noted in the private sector, where two-thirds of houses are built by individual developers. According to Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics data, last year Russians built a sum total of 9.9 million square meters at their own expense and with the help of credits — 40 percent more than in 1994. Citizens are now seeking to resolve the housing problem independently. The share of individual dwellings in the total volume of housing commissioned is increasing. In 1995 it stood at 23.2 percent against 10.9 percent in 1991 and 5.8 percent in 1987.

Russia: Civil Code Creates 'Civilized Market'

964F1500A Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 5

[Article by S. Alekseyev, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Private Law Research Center of the Russian president and corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences: "The Code of a Civilized Market"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **Adopting the second part of the Civil Code and bringing to a conclusion the creation of contemporary civil legislation in Russia is a really significant event, marking a major turning point and strengthening hope for the success of democratic transformations in Russia.**

Unchanging Basis of the Contemporary Market

The results of "cardinal" reforms occurring in Russia since 1992 are uneven and contradictory.

A number of positive phenomena and processes are evident resulting from the reforms (strengthening of the ruble, impulses toward commercial activity, positive signs on the consumer market). It is highly symptomatic that at the present time it seems that virtually all parties and movements are expressing themselves "in favor of the market" in various forms, and, understandably, for a market that is modern and civilized.

At the same time, in connection with the reforms negative phenomena and processes have occurred and are expanding. Along with the unceasing decline in production in the leading branches and the major social stratification, impoverishment of science, public health, and culture which traumatize the public, great concern is created specifically by that which is incompatible with the demands of a contemporary civilized market. Dictatorship by a corrupt officialdom continues in the economy, and many market relations are dominated by morals of a criminal nature, while the wave of abuses, contractual anarchy, nonpayments, and nonfulfillment of their obligations by parties to contracts goes on.

What is the cause of such negative phenomena? Is it due only, as believed by a number of specialists, to the fact that economic reforms, which started in January 1992 with the "freeing" of prices, took place in the nationalized monopolized economy under conditions created by a strong influence of the shadow economy and criminal forces, and privatization, which developed later, acquired a nomenklatura-distributive character and had little effect on production?

According to all information, that is the main reason, which unfortunately is yet to be eliminated.

At the same time, our troubles, manifested in the shortcomings of the reforms, consists of the fact that these reforms started not only in the nationalized monopolistic economy, with a weak development of individual-private and private-collective production property, but also under conditions created by a highly nationalized legal system and, what should be particularly underscored, with the absence of contemporary civil legislation.

At the same time all the countries, without exception, where developed market economies are currently dominant, included such a stage in their development as a mandatory premise, when feudal-state dictatorship and a free-wheeling market were being decisively overcome and a developed civil law was being adopted.

That is the way it was in France, where as long ago as at the beginning of the past century a progressive civil code was adopted. The same took place in Germany as well, where on the threshold of this century, the German Civil Legal Code came into being. In the United States, Britain, and other countries the development of a modern market economy invariably started with the adoption in real life (often through legal practice and precedents) of civil law institutions and principles—equality under civil law, inviolability of property rights, freedom of

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agreement, clear regulation of norms involved in the entire complex of contractual and non-contractual liability, and consolidation of justice within society.

Until recently our society had civil laws (1922 and 1964 civil codes) which certainly did not meet the requirements of a developed commodity-market economy and to a great degree bore a public and an ideologized character. In addition to that there was a strong tendency in general to replace civil laws with an economic or a commercial code based on the principles of the administrative-command management system.

It is only now that the first modern civil code in the history of Russian society has gone into effect. Its first part became effective as of January 1995, while the second part became effective on 1 March 1996.

The Law Regulating Market Relations

What is the merit of the new Russian civil legislation? In a most general way it is possible to answer that question as follows: the Civil Code and other civil laws lend the market a contemporary and a civilized character.

That finds its expression, first of all in the fact that the Russian Civil Code, prepared on the basis of domestic and world experience, and data on modern commercial activity and international documents, controls market relations and involves elaborated legal regulation of complex and multifaceted market relations and property and non-proprietary rights of citizens and other subjects.

The first and second parts of the Russian Civil Code contains 60 chapters and 1,109 articles. The first part of the Code covers various issues connected with the legal position of citizens and legal bodies, including-individual entrepreneurs, economic partnerships and associations, production cooperatives, noncommercial organizations, as well as issues pertaining to securities, representation, property, its acquisition, protection, and status and other material rights, fulfillment and satisfaction of obligations, mortgages, conclusion and dissolution of contracts, etc.

The second part of the Code regulates various types of agreements and obligations—purchase-sale, leasing, contracting, borrowing and credit, storage, insurance, trusteeship, damage liability, etc., including such specific forms as financial leases, agency contracts, commercial concession and much more that deals with today's commercial activity. The first and second parts of the Code include elements that are already ensuring the functioning of a modern market economy (the third part of the Code, the work on which is nearing completion, regulates issues dealing with copyright law, inventors' law, and a number of other exceptional laws as well as the law of inheritance).

In that connection one can only be surprised how our Russian market was able to function at all with the absence of appropriate legislative regulation of its functions. The question arises on the basis of what rules was the varied commercial activity carried out in marketing, supply, temporary utilization of property, construction, and all other commercial operations? In accordance with the norms of an ideologized socialist civil code? On the basis of old State Planning Commission instructions? Instinctively? Under the dictatorship of all-powerful government monopolies? Or at the will of the new Russian compradore bourgeoisie?

It is not difficult to see that much of the confusion and troubles in our still awkward, "street market," government official-criminal market economy, including systematic nonpayments, acute conflicts, massive abuses and much else resulting from street market-crooked morals, took place to a great degree because the real commercial practice lacked even the least worked out norm-setting and legislative regulation suiting the requirements of a modern market economy.

That is why even the enemies of current reforms quite justifiably support the Civil Code and it is also necessary to give its due to such a civil position which is occupied by most of the politicians, parties, and movements, meeting the requirements of the present stage of civilization and culture.

Private Law—Basis of a Modern Civilized Market

The worth of the Civil Code, its role in granting the market a modern civilized character, is not limited to the fact that it is called upon to ensure legally strict regulation of commercial market relations and procedures.

It is possible to assert with considerable certainty that it is specifically the Russian Civil Code that incorporates the legislatively consolidated legal, and in some regards, even the "philosophical" basis of a modern market economy, its essence being economic freedom, expressed in the law, i.e. private law.

It is widely known and commonly recognized that the backbone of developed market relations consists of economic freedom of commodity producers as well as of other participants of commercial activity.

Economic freedom, however, is not the exercise of free will in economic life, it is not the dominance of a powerful and crooked street-market mentality. Economic freedom becomes the backbone and source of energy of the economy only when it is legislatively consolidated in legal principles, in their expanded complex, i.e. embedded in rights that in accordance with historically formed traditions are collectively called "private law."

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The following explanation would be appropriate at this point. The term "private law" is a new and unaccustomed one in our lexicon (in former times, the very idea of private law was categorically rejected in the name of the dominant command-administrative methods and morals). At the present time as well, this term is frequently understood in a simplified form, primitively—in the sense that it gives free rein to strictly selfish interests, almost purely personal matters.

At the same time the very idea of private law concerns major and substantial issues. Private law, as compared with "public law" (based on principles of authority-subordination, the subordination of subjects), provides legal guarantees of freedom for the commodity producer, prohibits the arbitrary intervention by anyone, including the authorities, in private matters or with the enjoyment of economic freedom. It is called upon to ensure necessary freedom in the activity of commodity producers and all participants in economic operations, i.e. the existence and stability of a legal sphere which provides for the inviolability of property rights, freedom of agreement, and where legal priority belongs to the subjects themselves who function with regard to each other on the basis of equality, autonomy, on their own will and determine behavior in their own interests.

At the same time regulation in the sphere of private-legal relations remains a law. Law, however, if it is not subordinated to narrowly ideological tasks, presumes the adoption of an order in life which eliminates abuses, morally reprehensible behavior, dictatorship by the strong, and where the free behavior of people is practiced within certain limits as determined by law, in accordance with requirements of justice, conscientiousness, and other modern prerequisites of civilization and culture.

At this point we would like to focus attention on the fact that the Russian Civil Code right off, in the very first article specifically points out such common underpinnings of civil legislation which express the just cited prerequisites—prerequisites of private law, its "spirit." They are:

equality of subjects;
inviolability of property rights;
freedom of agreement;
prohibition of arbitrary intervention in the private affairs of someone;
need for the unhindered exercise of civil rights;
protection and restoration of violated rights;
protection of rights by courts.

The Code also specifically underlines that individuals acquire and practice civil rights "at their own will and in their own interest" (Paragraph 2, Article 1) and that along with equality subjects of civil law also have autonomy and property independence.

All of these principles are realized in the Code on the basis of strict legal regulation, called upon to implement, as it states in the Code, the principles of conscientiousness, wisdom, and justice.

Urgent Measures

I will not conceal the fact that the circumstance that the fundamentals of civil legislation incorporated in the Civil Code, which are the actual legislative norms (let us recall that the first part of the Civil Code acquired legal power as of 1 January 1995), are yet to become immutable rules and requirements in our Russian reality, causes acute concern. The "spirit" of private law—economic freedom expressed in the law, has still not established itself in our reality to this day. In many regards it is specifically for this reason, that our society, having proclaimed the slogan of transition from a command-administrative to a market economy, is still a long way from a civilized market.

More than that. In our reality of today we periodically encounter facts indicating disregard not only of the listed premises of civil legislation, but also facts indicating direct violations of the Civil Code. As in the past there are cases when authorities arbitrarily intervene in private matters, and fail to consider the autonomy and property independence of participants in the civil turnover or comply with the principle of inviolability of property rights.

Life is again yet another time confirming the axiom that it is not enough merely to publish a law that satisfies the requirements of the times. It is necessary for the law to be accompanied by effective measures which would make the norms of that law a reality.

The urgent, priority measures to implement into life the new Russian civil legislation, in my opinion, must include the following three:

First measure: Training, mastery of the new Civil Code by the greatest possible number of Russian citizens. At the same time, along with mastery, perhaps even just acquaintance with legislative innovations applying literally to all aspects of commercial activity, and even to the everyday life of each one of us, it is necessary to put in the forefront the proper understanding by every Russian citizen, all persons taking part in civil relations, of the "spirit" of private law, principles of equality, inviolability of property rights, freedom of agreement, and prohibition of arbitrary intervention by anyone in the private affairs of others. Their comprehension and

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transformation into a constant way of life and well-defined, inviolable norms of behavior must be ensured.

Second measure: Justice and comprehension of the fundamentally new premises of civil legislation by all the courts in Russia. Such initiatives would really begin to "resound" becoming truly significant legal realities, probably only after the Constitutional Court, the general jurisdiction courts, as well as the arbitration courts reach one, two, or even three decisions based directly on the basic positions of the Code (for example, with reference to the requirement concurring inviolability of property rights). It is possible to predict with confidence that it is specifically at that time that the situation with the legal regulation of market relations will change abruptly and sharply. It will change toward the adoption of strict legal order and rigid observance of law and order.

Third measure: Personnel. By contrast with countries with developing market relationships and a highly developed legal culture, contemporary Russian society has very few highly skilled specialists in private law. Without such specialists actual implementation of the provisions contained in new civil legislation, including those in the area of law and order, will prove to be an unpromising undertaking.

Russia: Agroindustrial Sector Plans Examined

964F1333A Moscow INTERFAKS-AIF in Russian 19-25 Feb 96 No 7, p 3

[Article by Konstantin Shcheglov: "Harvest-96 May Begin at the White House"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **After three months of reflection and a prolonged "clarification of relations" among various ministries, the RF Government finally adopted a decree on measures to stabilize the economic status of the APK [agroindustrial complex] in 1996. Taking into account the almost eight-page "bouquet of disagreements" among the interested departments, it was decided to limit it to a "minimum program." In practice last year's scheme remains in force, and all the planned expenditures are preserved within the framework of the 1996 budget. At the same time, the peasants' desperate calls for financial support clearly did not receive the broad publicity that the miners' demands did. But this certainly does not mean that the lobbying potential of farmers has been exhausted and that after the Agrarian Party's failure in the parliamentary elections, it can be dismissed.**

How Are We Going To Plant, Fellows?

The leader of the party and the director of the coordinating council of collective actions of APK laborers, Mikhail Lapshin, stated in an interview with Interfaks that "it would not hurt the officials who are settled in at the RF Government Building to take a look at how the peasants will have to plant this year." Then they will perhaps understand that it will not do that they have not directed one kopeck from the budget to the needs of the APK for 2.5 months (and especially since overall, the 1995 budget was only 64 percent fulfilled as to support for the APK). Unlike the recent picketing miners, according to M. Lapshin, the peasants do not intend to bang their hard hats on the capital's asphalt. But perhaps they will try to plant grass on Krasnopresnenskiy Embankment, scattering a handful of seed from a bast basket. The peasants, under a decision made last week, plan to begin the first collective protest action against the governmental reform course "directed to breaking down the APK and the country's economy in general" on 10 March.

Meanwhile, the deputy group composed of members of the Agrarian Party in the State Duma and its Committee on Agrarian Questions have ascertained that the traditional harvest campaign this year is unfolding on the edge of the abyss. About 56 percent of the agricultural enterprises of all forms of ownership ended 1995 with losses, the total volume of which came to 2 trillion rubles [R]. Most regions have not even begun to create reserves of fuel for spring field work yet, and the peasants of 35 of the 89 oblasts and republics of Russia were unable to obtain even a kilogram of mineral fertilizer in October-December. Meanwhile the time for top dressing winter wheat in the Northern Caucasus, for example, has already come. The shortage of seeds for spring grain crops comes to about 700,000 tonnes (slightly less than 10 percent of the requirement). However, the government itself is not entertaining any illusions over the situation in the countryside. The kind of harvest that can be expected in the fall is prescribed in black and white in the decree—77 million tonnes of grain.

This is of course slightly more than last year's disastrous 63.5 million tonnes, but still substantially less than the 116.7 million tonnes in 1990.

Farmers From the West Are 'Seizing' the Russian Market

At the impetus of agrarian deputies, the new Duma is sounding the alarm. Russia has "lost its food independence," it stated in a special decree. In 1995 the RF imported, according to the document, more than 40 percent of its food products, while this year, "if special measures to stabilize the situation in the APK are not adopted," imports will rise to 50-60 percent. Russia, the decree asserts, has already crossed the line to where one

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can speak of the loss of food independence. And so the lower chamber ordered the government to immediately examine the question of the condition of the APK and adopt a decree on measures to stabilize its economic status. Now that the document has been adopted, however, as vice premier Aleksandr Zaveryukha acknowledged in an interview with Interfaks, it "does not, of course, solve all the APK's problems by any means." The agrarians have not lost hope that the president will "change his mind" and sign the Law on State Regulation of Agroindustrial Production adopted by the Duma. In brief, it envisions for the APK "regulated price ceilings for energy media and the most significant types of industrial output" and subsidies in the acquisition of equipment, fertilizers, breeding stock, and seed.

The 'Pipe Dream' of Aleksandr Zaveryukha

When discussing the APK's financial problems, vice premier Aleksandr Zaveryukha loves to compare the condition of Russian and American farmers, especially after his recent trip to Washington where he took part in the work of the Gore-Chernomyrdin commission. And so the United States this year has allocated $67 billion, or about R360 trillion to support its farmers, according to A. Zaveryukha, while the RF budget envisions directing only R13.1 trillion to the needs of agricultural production. In addition there is the question of how this appropriation will be made. Within this sum, the last 17-page decree of the government preserves compensation grants [dotatsiya] for production of the main types of animal husbandry and crop farming output. Nor does the government renounce the methods of supporting the APK so traditional for Russia like deferred payment and extensions on paying for credits (before the reforms they were usually just written off). Commodity credit is preserved, and it was thanks to that, according to A. Zaveryukha, that the agrarian sector last year performed about 60 percent of all field work. The delivery of leased agricultural equipment to the countryside is being expanded (in 1995 about 50 percent of the tractors and almost all the grain harvesting combines were supplied to the APK under this system).

Ivan Starikov Does Not Want To Help the APK the Old Way

The RF deputy minister of economics Ivan Starikov, in the recent past a Duma deputy and head of the largest sovkhoz in Novosibirsk Oblast, took a skeptical attitude toward the government decree, to put it mildly.

In talking with the Interfaks correspondent, he assessed it merely as the "Cabinet of Ministers' short-term response to the situation in the APK, and essentially no more than a measure to conduct the 1996 harvest." I. Starikov is certainly not against state support of the agrarian sector as the "least protected in conditions of the transition to the market."

But he believes that in offering the APK that very commodity credit, the state is extending credit not to the peasant but to oil refineries and fuel sellers who immediately inflate prices for fuel and lubricants for the countryside. As for budget capital, in I. Starikov's opinion it must be used primarily to support not the APK but the low-income strata of the population—for example in the form of issuing special food coupons. This would make it possible to support prices and improve the sales of agricultural products, and thereby make life easier for those farms which produce output that is in demand.

Overall, reform of the entire system for financing the APK is needed in order to turn it toward those farms which have "restructured their activity in market conditions, reduced production costs, and raised efficiency." But it seems that no one is interested in fighting over this with the peasants, who continue to insist on direct allocation of budget compensation grants to them.

Russia: Plans for Nuclear Power Plants in 1996 Described

LD0304121996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0944 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Russian nuclear power plants will produce no less than 91 billion kilowatt hours in 1996, sources at the press service of the Russian Rosenergoatom state nuclear concern told Interfax.

Last year they generated 99.3 billion kilowatt hours of energy 101.5 percent as against 1994.

A special operation regime will be introduced for 12 power units of the first generation with an overall capacity of 5,762 megawatts. They are four power units with water-moderated reactors of the VVER [water-cooled water-moderated reactor] type and eight power units with uranium graphite-moderated reactors of the RBMK [high-power pressure tube] type installed at the Smolensk, Kursk, Leningrad, Kola and Novovoronezh nuclear power plants.

Despite financial difficulties, the concern will work for better safety of nuclear power plants and modernize, reequip and reconstruct power units of the first and second generations. This year it is planned to introduce a system of territorial radiation control at the Balakovo, Beloyarsk, Kalinin, Kursk and Novovoronezh nuclear power plants with a central control console at the concern's crisis center.

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This year the concern will invest over 900 billion rubles to finalize construction of power units and build nuclear power plants with new generation reactors of the VVER type. It is planned to finalize construction of the third power unit of the Kalinin nuclear power plant and put it into commission in 1997, as well as finalize the fifth power unit of the Kursk nuclear power plant and the first power unit of the Rostov nuclear power plant, to be put into commission in 1998-1999.

Construction of substitute facilities at the Novovoronezh nuclear power plant (the second power unit) and the Kola nuclear power plant (the second power unit) will go on this year.

Russia operates nine nuclear power plants with 29 power units. Their average produce is 12 percent of the overall electricity output.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Analyzes Effect of Russia-Belarus Accord on Policy

LD0204172696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1634 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 2 (Itar-Tass) — Defying press reports that Ukraine was apparently standing on the sidelines of the integration processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma in his address to the parliament, mainly devoted to the basic guidelines for the country's foreign policy, stressed that Ukraine was consistently favouring the development of integration processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States based on mutual benefit, equality and without any limits imposed on its participants.

Making it clear that his country was closely following the CIS integration processes and evaluating them from its own economic and foreign political viewpoint, President Kuchma said, "We regard the CIS as an important mechanism of maintaining equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation among independent states."

Along with this, Kuchma said "any attempts at revivifying the USSR have no historical perspective and only hamper the normal development of integration."

While stressing "the immutability of our policy aimed at a strategic partnership with Russia," Kuchma pointed out that "our strategy consists in drawing closer to the European structures. Integration in Europe is our conscious and historic choice."

He further explained that Ukraine's foreign policy aimed at ensuring "its balanced and multi-vector" character. "We shall develop trade, economic, political, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation with countries in North and Latin America, Western Europe, Middle and Near East and the Asian region," he stressed.

As concerns Russia, Kuchma said that "despite the fact that Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kiev has been postponed, dialogue between the two countries will continue," and hope was alive that a full-scale treaty would be signed between Russia and Ukraine.

"The signing of an agreement on the Community between Russia and Belarus has certain positive points for Ukraine. If economic processes become more intensive within the framework of the new structure, it will tell on economic relations between those countries and Ukraine," Ukrainian parliament speaker Alexander Moroz told journalists within hours of the signing in Moscow.

Moroz said he was convinced that the signing of the accord between Russia and Belarus provided no ground for Ukraine to re-assess its own foreign policy or revise it.

He said it was completely impossible to create a single new state made up of the former Soviet republics even on new terms. But it was equally impossible to waive opportunities for economic integration, Moroz stressed.

Unlike the parliament speaker, Ukrainian Vice-Premier for Political and Legal Matters Aleksandr Yemets told Tass that since Ukraine is a participating country in the CIS, the Agreement between Russia and Belarus would certainly affect Ukraine, mainly in the foreign political sphere.

Yemets said that certain changes will have to be made to the country's foreign political decisions. At the same time, the Ukrainian Vice-Premier said "the effect will be negligible on Ukraine's internal processes."

Spokesman for the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry Yuriy Sergeyev told Itar-Tass that Ukraine regarded the signing of the Agreement on the community between Russia and Belarus keeping in mind that "it is the sovereign right of every nation to choose one or another form of its existence in line with its historical, national and cultural traditions."

Like other Ukrainian politicians, Sergeyev stressed that Ukraine "opposes in principle any attempts at reanimating the Soviet Union in any form." He said that any attempts at restoring the USSR can lead "to a revision of some priorities in the country's foreign political activity, including with regard to the CIS."

Ukraine: Dialogue Continues Despite Delay of Yeltsin Visit

LD0204170996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 2 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Despite the postponement of President Yeltsin's visit to Kiev, the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue continues, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said in his annual address to the parliament Tuesday.

The big political treaty between the two countries will be signed, Kuchma hoped. He said Ukraine was still willing to preserve strategic partnership and good-neighborly relations with Russia.

"Ukraine has consistently supported integration within the CIS, based on the principles of mutual benefit and equality," he said.

"We regard the CIS as an important mechanism for support of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation

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between the independent states under the new conditions," Kuchma stated. "At the same time, we maintain that attempts to reanimate the former Soviet Union do not have a historical perspective and only hamper normal integration."

The postponement of President Yeltsin's visit to Ukraine is a normal event which should not be dramatized, Ukrainian National Security Council Secretary Vladimir Gorbulin told journalists in Kiev Tuesday.

The signing of unification documents between Russia and Belarus and the meeting of the Russian, Kyrgyz, Kazakh and Belarusian presidents in Moscow had caused the postponement rather than the ongoing election race in Russia, he said.

"The presidents of Russia and Ukraine will meet before the presidential elections in Russia," Gorbulin said.

Ukraine: Moroz Notes 'Positive Points' of Russia-Belarus Treaty

LD0204135996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1300 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 2 (Itar-Tass) — Ukraine, which has apparently been standing on the sidelines of the integration processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States, has nevertheless been closely following the processes and evaluating them from its own economic and foreign political viewpoint.

"The signing of an agreement on the Community between Russia and Belarus has certain positive points for Ukraine. If economic processes become more intensive within the framework of the new structure, it will tell on economic relations between those countries and Ukraine," Ukrainian parliament speaker Oleksandr Moroz told journalists within hours of the signing in Moscow.

Moroz said he was convinced that the signing of the accord between Russia and Belarus provided no ground for Ukraine to re-assess its own foreign policy or revise it.

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Unlike the parliament speaker, Ukrainian Vice-Premier for Political and Legal Matters Oleksandr Yemets told Tass that since Ukraine is a participating country in the CIS, the Agreement between Russia and Belarus would certainly affect Ukraine, mainly in the foreign political sphere.

Yemets said that certain changes will have to be made to the country's foreign political decisions. At the same time, the Ukrainian Vice-Premier said "the effect will be negligible on Ukraine's internal processes."

Ukraine: Foreign Ministry Seeks Closer Ties With NATO

LD0204130996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1235 GMT 2 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Raisa Stetsira]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 2 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — "As a state outside blocs, Ukraine is interested in establishing ties of special partnership with NATO," the head of the press department of the Ukrainian foreign ministry, Yuriy Serhiyov, has said.

Speaking at today's briefing, he stressed that Ukraine can claim the role of NATO's special partner because of its geopolitical situation and economic potential. Such relations, the diplomat said, should be "more flexible" and include "a wide consultative mechanism, which is primarily political". Such a mechanism could work in accordance with various formulae.

The foreign ministry representative pointed out the danger of existing opinion, in accordance with which NATO is "prepared to embrace Ukraine". This concerns only the deepening of political dialogue with the bloc within the framework of the "Partnership for Peace" programme, he said.

Ukraine: Minister Says No Toxic Substances in Imported U.S. Soy Cake

WS0304073196 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0305 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 2 — Agriculture Minister Pavlo Haydutskyy said Monday that soy cake imported from the United States according to interstate agreement doesn't contain toxic substances.

"Detailed examination didn't prove the presence of the 'patulin' mycotoxin in soy cake," Haydutskyy said. Simultaneously, Deputy Chief State Veterinary Medicine Inspector Viktor Matuzenko said that "veterinary examination detected surplus of the natural enzyme 'uriaz' in the soy cake."

An article appearing in VSEUKRAINSKIE VEDOMOSTIE newspaper more than two weeks ago quoted Kharkov poultry industry officials as charging that the soy cakes, used to feed poultry, were contaminated by the toxin, and that a $20 million U.S. Agriculture department preferential credit was used to encourage their consumption by the Ukrainian birds.

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National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Presents Annual Report to Supreme Council

LD0204144796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1310 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The year 1995 will enter history as a successful year, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma believes.

In his annual report to the Supreme Council on domestic and foreign policy issues on 2 April, he stressed that the grounds for such an assertion are the state's greater prudence, the avoidance of a political crisis and confrontation between the legislative and executive authorities, the stimulation of a modern constitutional process, and Ukraine's establishment in the world community.

The president also counted as achievements the establishment of a basis for market relations in Ukraine. He said Ukraine's most important achievement is the preservation of peace and calm thanks to the people's patience.

Leonid Kuchma emphasized that economic reforms are being carried out in Ukraine in the face of "opposition of an anti-system nature," as well as citizens' "phenomenon of lost hopes." He said that to develop policies on the basis of people's moods, when some people are not yet ready for economic reforms, would be "irresponsible and amoral."

Leonid Kuchma emphasized that "the nature of the economic crisis in Ukraine is diverse and should not be summarized only as the introduction of market relations." "Sabotage of the state's economic course," by individual higher officials and others, he believes, could destabilize social life.

According to the president, several factors have brought about the economic crisis: the simultaneous collapse of the USSR and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; the energy crisis and terrific increases in fuel prices; the dearth of investment; and the outflow of capital abroad, as well as delays in reforms.

Leonid Kuchma stressed that the authorities' main tasks now are to achieve consolidation and "maximum will and efforts" to carry out reforms. He emphasized that now "the danger of a return to the past is not ruled out, taking into account external and internal factors." At the same time, the head of state stressed, Ukraine has made its choice and there are no grounds to discuss other paths of development.

Ukraine: President Discusses Pricing Policy in Annual Report

LD0204194796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1310 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — An important result of the Ukrainian state's pricing policy in 1995 was the significant decrease in the difference between the rate of increase in prices for industrial and agricultural products. This was stated by the Ukrainian president in his annual report to the Ukrainian Supreme Council.

With the aim of supporting prices for agricultural producers, this year the state will regulate the price of products used by agriculture (fuel, machinery, fertilizers) as well as organizations that provide services to the sector.

The main task of the pricing policy for 1996 will be to promote industrial growth and market transformations, and ensure that price proportions in inter-sectoral exchange are equal. In this respect, it is insufficient to just rely on monetary measures.

This year the pricing policy will be based on further expanding the sphere of free price formation, and will be implemented in the area of the demonopolization of the economy and in terms of creating real conditions for competition. In addition, it is expected to target anti-monopoly price regulation not only at the production sector but also at the turnover of goods.

One of the main tasks is to ensure that the state maintains control over pricing processes and that inflationary upsurges are avoided.

There remain internal factors for the increase in prices that could be effectively overcome. In the first place, we will conduct the policy of ensuring real pricing in production by means of removing from them the obligations of maintaining the social sphere, and the reduction in the price of energy and municipal services for the population will not be done by transferring these additional expenditures onto the cost price of goods.

Prices for fuel, and housing and municipal services for the population will be gradually increased until they reach their real value. Since the the beginning of this year, the state has paid 40 per cent of the value, but by the end of the year it is intended that the level of subsidy will be cut to 20 percent. The change in prices will only take place after preventive social protection measures have been adopted.

The attitudes to the pricing policy in the coal industry will be changed. In particular, it is envisaged to abolish the mechanism of settlement prices. The level of purchase prices for coal will be determined independently

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by coal companies or mines. State support for specific programs in the sector will be carried out by channeling funds from the budget, or from specially created reserves, into the development of mines, purchases of new machinery, the closure of unreliable and loss-making mines and finding jobs for the miners.

Ukraine: Kuchma Dissatisfied With Policy 'Dispersal'

LD0204154296 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1310 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — In his annual report to the Supreme Council on domestic and foreign policy on 2 April, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said he is dissatisfied with the "dispersal" of state policies between the legislative and executive authorities. He said that these policies "should be and will be formed by one constitutionally determined body of state power — the president, and will be implemented by all branches of power." Leonid Kuchma emphasized that he is willing to cooperate with all branches of power and political forces in working out the main principles of state policy, which, he is convinced, is now lacking in continuity.

Leonid Kuchma emphasized that he will develop relations with the Supreme Council on "constitutionally determined principles." In his opinion, "the current disorder is not caused by the division of powers, but because certain political forces do not wish to determine and implement their policies of power." In connection with this, he stressed that individuals working in the bodies of state power at any levels who do not agree with the state course "should engage in public politics, and not work in the power structures to make use of the possibilities for carrying out their own personal far-reaching plans." According to the president, such actions are "inadmissible and improper."

Leonid Kuchma said he was concerned by "attempts to discredit the constitutional treaty and determine its time limits." He stressed that "the president will assess restrictions on the term for its validity or any obstruction to it as gross violations of the constitutional field." "I will be forced to use all measures not to allow lawlessness," the head of state said.

Ukraine: Kuchma Report Discusses Problems With Economic Reform

LD0204155496 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1310 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — In many ways 1995 was a watershed year in the complex transition of the Ukrainian economy to an efficient market channel. There was a gradual change in the pattern of Ukraine's economic development: the old system of centralized division of resources and directive control by state bodies was truly eliminated; reforms of forms of ownership were carried out through the formal, and regrettably concealed, division of a considerable part of former state property; the total shortage of goods, traditional for the Soviet economy, was eliminated. This was said in the Ukrainian president's report distributed to the Ukrainian Supreme Council deputies.

However, the text notes, a legislative system for the transition of Ukraine's economy to market principles has not been created. A whole series of processes has not been regulated by legislation, which makes it possible for some economic entities to act contrary to state interests.

Objective reasons, which have emerged in the course of economic reforms, include imperfection, regressive structure, and the high inertia of the national economy, which was aimed mainly at producing goods with a low level of finishing, designated for cooperative supplies to former Soviet republics. Ukrainian industrial goods are not highly competitive even in traditional markets.

Subjective factors may include irresoluteness in carrying out market reforms and the many erroneous decisions in introducing new regulatory mechanisms in recent years. The artificial delay of economic reforms and the lack of necessary legislation, clear operational management, and economic regulation on the part of state executive authorities in the center and in the regions have caused the greatest damage.

Ukraine: Chernobyl Nuclear Station Staff Reprimanded Over Incident

LD0204202596 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The official investigation into the causes and circumstances of the incident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in November 1995 which released radioactive contamination into the premises of the first generating set and irradiated one of the workers, is over.

The report on the conclusion of the investigation states that "the organization of the system of radiation safety at the station requires substantial improvements", while "the structure of controlling the activity of ensuring radiation safety is imperfect."

It was also confirmed that the quality of the preliminary investigation into the incident was poor.

The chief engineer at the station, Tolstonohov; his deputies Honchar and Skrypov; Radiation Safety Section head Korotkov and his deputies Andreyev and

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Seyda; and inspection group head Mazurenko have been reprimanded. In addition, Tolstonohov, Korotkov, and Mazurenko were ordered to undergo a regular examination of their knowledge of technical safety regulations and norms in the nuclear power engineering sector.

Radiation Safety Section head Korotkov was suspended from his duties.

The chief engineer and the assistant to the director general of the station have until 5 May to submit a new draft structure for controlling radiation safety at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

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Belarus

Belarus: Popular Front Leader Accuses Lukashenka of 'High Treason'

WS0304081996 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0647 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chairman of the Belarusian Popular Front [BNF], Zyanon Paznyak, commenting at a BELAPAN correspondent's request on the Belarusian-Russian Treaty on the formation of a Commonwealth of Sovereign States said that "...this is an agreement on the gradual annexation of Belarus, divided into several stages."

In Mr Paznyak's opinion, Alyaksandr Lukashenka's conduct contains the indications of high treason, and on signing this treaty "Lukashenka loses the right to be the Belarusian president." The initiators and executors of the surrender of Belarusian statehood, the BNF leader stressed, "...should bear the responsibility before both the state and the people." Mr Paznyak holds that the formation of this Commonwealth leads to the restoration of opposition blocs in the world. In particular he considers the decision on NATO eastward expansion "final and irrevocable."

Belarus: Independence Supporters Stage Minsk Protest Rally

WS0304075096 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0647 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Since approximately 3pm [1200 GMT] on April 2 Independence Square in Minsk, on which the supporters of Belarus independence intended to place pickets, has been cordoned off by the militia. Access is blockaded by militia vehicles one-two blocks from the square. Vehicles with loud-speakers are informing people that a mass-meeting is to take place at the building of the Belhyprovodkhoz research institute on Varvasheni Street, but, as is generally known, no rallies were planned there. Apart from the picketing, a meeting between some MPs and their electorate was to be held on Independence Square. As of 4.45pm., small groups of demonstrators concentrated close to the militia cordons on the sides of the square.

Valyantsin Holubew, deputy chairman of the Belarusian Popular Front [BNF], who has also arrived at the square, has informed a BELAPAN correspondent that the entire square is cordoned off by troops. In the militia buses parked in the centre of the square, he saw helmets, shields and arms. Apart from militia vehicles, there is gas dispensing equipment. As of 5pm, the militia's conduct may be defined as rather civilised and calm.

At 4.50pm the groups of people standing by the militia cordons raised white-red-white flags. Demonstrators are continuing to arrive, the militia warns that participation in an unauthorised mass-meeting will entail administrative punishment, and hooligan actions-criminal punishment.

At 5.05-5.10pm. internal troops' units of about 300 men strong in special uniform and equipment were drawn up to the crossroads between Skaryna Avenue and Valadarski Street where the biggest group of demonstrators was concentrated.

At 5.15 the deputy chairman of the Belarusian Popular Front, Valyantsin Holubew, spoke to the masses through a loud-speaker. He informed the demonstrators that the authorities had given armed forces the order to toughly stop would-be decisive actions, including the use of firearms and toxic gas. "The BNF wants neither bloodshed nor our enemies to provoke it," the BNF leader said. He called on those gathering to form columns and go to the Belhyprovodkhoz research institute, Varvasheni Street, without hindering the traffic. A column of about 5 thousand demonstrators shouting the slogans "Zhyve Belarus" [Long live Belarus], "Down with Luka [Lukashenka]" and others started to move along the sidewalks of the avenue.

At 5.30 the participants of the procession walked out to the carriageway near the building of the Belarusian State Committee for State Security. However, on Kastrychnitskaya Square, officers of militia detachments for special purposes made them return to the sidewalks by the threat of using force. Near the building of the circus the column turned to Yanka Kupala Street and made its way towards Varvashenya Street. Near the building of the research institute the demonstrators moving at the head of the column stopped to wait for the others to catch up with them. However, as it turned out, there was no room enough for the demonstrators then numbering nearly 10,000 people. In this regard it was decided to go to the square at the Palace of Sports.

At approximately 6.15pm the column started to move towards the Palace of Sports on Masherau Avenue. At 7.00pm thousands of people gathered at the Palace of Sports. The participants of the march through the city made up a significant part of them. At 7.10 a meeting of the demonstrators with MP Pavel Znavets started.

According to various estimates, up to 30,000 people attended the rally. Young people formed the major part of the demonstrators. The deputy chairman of the Belarusian Popular Front, Vintsuk Vyachorka, estimated the number of demonstrators at 50,000. In any case the eyewitnesses insisted that the crowds had not been smaller than during the March 24 protest mass meeting against the Belarusian-Russian Union treaty and the March 31 rally in support of this treaty.

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Lyavon Barshchewski, deputy chairman of the BNF, presided over the rally. MP Pavel Znavets said that Alyaksandr Lukashenka's policy "gives rise today to just indignation among Belarusian people." He read out the text of a resolution which was approved by those present. The resolution in particular read, "We, citizens of sovereign Belarus, express protest against the flagrant demagogic violation of the national Constitution by the President. For Alyaksandr Lukashenka, this unification is the only opportunity to evade the responsibility for the collapse of his economic policy... We support economic integration between Belarus and the neighbouring states, in the first instance with democratic Russia. But we reserve the right to defend the independence of Belarus by every method possible against the people who dream to see themselves on the throne of an empire."

Syarhey Antonchyk, a former deputy to the Supreme Soviet, read out the text of an oath of loyalty to Belarus, which those present took. They swore to give their lives for independence if necessary.

Yuriy Tyma, a deputy to the Supreme Rada [Council] of Ukraine, greeted Belarusians on behalf of the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian National Self-Defence Assembly. He said, "Today you have shown the whole world that Belarus really longs for independence."

Vintsuk Vyachorka read out the text of an appeal to the Belarusian Supreme Soviet which was also approved by those present. The appeal contained a strong protest against the Belarusian leadership's political games, and the demand not to ratify any agreements "which turn Belarus into a colony of the unstable warring state." Demonstrators also backed the decision to instruct the MPs attending the rally to do everything in their power to make Alyaksandr Lukashenka leave the post of President.

Speeches were repeatedly interrupted by demonstrators who chanted the slogans "Down with Lukashenka!", "Impeachment!", "Zhyve Belarus!", "Young people for Belarus!" etc.

The rally came to an end at about 7.50pm. Pavel Znavets expressed gratitude for participation in the action, especially to young people who, in his opinion, "must save Belarus." He urged people to participate in the "Chernobylski Shlyakh" [Chernobyl Path] action timed to the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. He said, "Chernobyl is driving us into physical decay, and, after Lukashenka came to power, into moral one."

Having closed the rally Lyavon Barshchewski warned its participants about likely provocations, and urged them to calmly disperse. Making the way towards the metro demonstrators saw over 40 buses full of militiamen on Masheraw Avenue and on the bridge adjacent to the avenue. Near the metro station Nyamiha people's stream divided into several parts. The major one moved in the direction of Skaryna Avenue on which crowds started to scatter.

According to a BELAPAN correspondent, reinforced militia details continued to stand at all the crossroads from Lenin Street to Independence Square and the entrance of the building of the State Committee for State Security until dark. As of 8.30pm, Independence Square was still under the militia's control. The metro entrance on the square was still kept closed.

Belarus: MP Says Treaty With Russia 'Will Do No Real Good'

MK0204140896 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 3

[NEGA report: "Belarus"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the leader of the "Civic Action" parliament faction, Stanislau Bohdankevich, the treaty between the Russian Federation and Belarus will do no real good because there already are no customs borders, nor limits, nor quotas in Belarus, which enables, in particular, enterprises of the republic to freely sell their products.

According to Stanislau Bohdankevich, Belarus has ideal conditions for integration, which should be developed. "There are no people opposing rewarding economic integration with Russia" in the republic. However, "President Lukashenka uses the people's nostalgia to bolster his own power as well as to play ball in the election campaign in Russia," Stanislau Bohdankevich thinks.

Moldova

Moldova: Snegur Hopes To Restore Traditional Contacts With Baltics

LD0204191896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1455 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] President Mircea Snegur Tuesday began an official visit to the Baltic countries. He will stay in Estonia on April 2 and 3 and in Lithuania on April 4 and 5.

Before his departure from the Chisinau airport, he told journalists that the purpose of his visit is to restore traditional friendly contacts between Moldova and the Baltic states, which had been ruptured after the proclamation of those countries' independence.

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"These visits reflect the consistent concept of Moldova's foreign policy aimed at establishing mutually advantageous cooperation with all countries," said Snegur.

He announced that in Tallinn a fundamental statement on mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation between Moldova and Estonia is to be concluded. Also, a protocol on cooperation between the foreign ministries, an intergovernmental agreement on cultural cooperation and an agreement on information exchanges between the two countries' state information agencies is to be signed.

"I hope these documents will set a legal framework for broadening bilateral cooperation," said Snegur.

Speaking about his visit to Lithuania he said that a basic treaty on cooperation with Lithuania was signed in 1995 during President Brazauskas's visit to Chisinau. To quote Snegur, agreements on trade and economic relations, on cooperation between the interior ministries in combating organized crime and on cooperation in air communication, will be signed.

Snegur will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Mihai Popov, Economics Minister Valeriu Bobutac, Interior Minister Constantin Antoci and Minister of Culture Mihail Cibotaru.

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Georgia

Georgia: Nadibaidze, Grachev Hold News Conference 1 Apr

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[Report by Inga Dadiani on news conference by Pavel Grachev and Vardiko Nadibaidze, Russian and Georgian defense ministers, with unidentified correspondents at the Krtsanisi governmental residence outside Tbilisi on 1 April]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Dadiani] After a face-to-face meeting between Eduard Shevardnadze and Pavel Grachev, the Russian military delegation headed for the Krtsanisi governmental residence where the following documents were signed: a protocol on active cooperation between the Defense Ministries of the two countries, a protocol of a working meeting between the Defense Ministries of the two countries on training employees and military education, a protocol of a working meeting on pension guarantees for the Russian citizens and their families living in Georgia, a protocol of a working meeting on cooperation, a protocol on cooperation between the Russian and Georgian Air Forces, a protocol on cooperation in the field of air defense, a protocol on intentions and cooperation in naval affairs, a protocol on a working meeting between the Russian and Georgian delegations, and a protocol on the peacekeepers' draft mandate.

After signing these documents, the Russian and Georgian defense ministers congratulated each other on the results of fruitful work and gave a news conference.

Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze was the first one to take the floor.

[Nadibaidze] I would like to say words of gratitude. In a short space of three days, documents of great significance for the building of the Georgian Armed Forces were signed. It is thanks to Russia that we have been building regular Georgian Armed Forces for the last two years. This is a historic event for the Georgian Armed Forces. We have full understanding on all issues.

[Dadiani] Then Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev addressed the news conference.

[Grachev] I would like to share my impressions. This is the first meeting of our delegation in the present composition. It is the first one because for the first time I have arrived here together with the leading persons of the Russian Defense Ministry. We have signed a package of documents. We are planning to restore the Transcaucasian air defense system.

[Dadiani] Then questions followed.

[Correspondent] What does the document on changing the status of the Russian peacekeeping forces deployed in Abkhazia mean?

[Grachev] I am very glad if from your viewpoint this document is interesting. It means that you have assessed our work. In accordance with the agreement reached between the Russian and Georgian presidents, it was decided to prolong the old mandate until June 1996. We have now signed this document. The new document envisages more intensive assistance in restoring Georgia's industry and, in particular, the railway. The peacekeeping forces will look after its restoration and protection.

As regards other functions, the Georgian side has suggested that the peacekeeping forces should help refugees and take on policing functions. We shall not be able to decide this issue on our own. The United Nations has obligations that the peacekeeping forces must carry out. The issue of widening their mandate must be addressed at a UN session. This is not an issue for the defense ministers.

[Correspondent] Yesterday, Boris Yeltsin made a statement that combat actions in Chechnya must be stopped completely and the troops withdrawn from civilian territories. How would you comment on this?

[Grachev] I can understand your interest in this issue but I consider your question out of place. We are discussing completely different issues. I shall answer this question at a news conference in Moscow.

[Correspondent] Have you discussed the Black Sea Fleet?

[Nadibaidze] This issue has been raised for the first time. Experts are currently working on this.

[Grachev] I touched on this issue at a meeting with Shevardnadze today. The president said that Georgia wanted to become a naval state in future.

[Correspondent] How realistic are Georgia's claims over the Black Sea Fleet?

[Grachev] Personally, I have not heard such claims. However, Georgia, being a part of the former USSR with an outlet to the Black Sea, has the right over several ships of the Black Sea Fleet. This issue will be discussed in the future. However, having several ships does not mean you will have a fully fledged fleet. Ports must be geared up along with the ground control system and security. When all these have been ready, then we can talk about ships.

[Correspondent] Before asking a question, I would like to congratulate Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze on his birthday. Now the question: Pavel

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Sergeyevich, you were talking about further integration. Will not the settlement of the Abkhaz issue give momentum to this integration? Was Georgia's role as a mediator between Russia and Chechnya agreed upon?

[Grachev] You have asked a clever question. As recently as yesterday, it was your defense minister's birthday. Let the birthday man answer the question.

[Correspondent] But I am also interested in your point of view.

[Grachev] Let the birthday man answer first, then.

[Nadibaidze] This is not a simple political question and we, the military, are carrying out our duties.

[Grachev] You probably know Russia's attitude toward this problem. This has been fixed at the Moscow meeting. We, the military, are ready to carry out the presidents' decisions. The Abkhaz issue will not influence the future integration, but in the meantime, I cannot help mentioning that sometimes we are ready to tie up Georgian leadership's ideas with our relations. But this concerns the parliament and politicians more.

As regards Georgia's role as a mediator in the Chechen settlement, Chechnya is irrelevant here. There is Georgia, there is Russia, and Chechnya is a part of Russia, and I ask you to view it only as such.

[Correspondent] Are you going to visit Abkhazia?

[Grachev] No, I am not. However, I would like to say that it has crossed my mind. Primakov suggested I visit Abkhazia and meet Ardzinba. However, at the end of the day, it is my decision. I have decided to return to Moscow.

Russia: Shevardnadze Outlines Land Reform Course

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[Speech by Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze at a conference on 25 February 1996: "The Land Is Our Concern. The Property Owner Is the Pillar of a Democratic State"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As we know, a couple of days ago in Tbilisi there was a conference of leaders of regional and local administrations conducted by President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze. Taking into account the exceptional importance of the question under discussion, the draft law on ownership of agricultural land, leaders of ministries and departments, scholars and specialists, and representatives of the republic parliament and the public were invited.

Republic State Minister Niko Lekishvili participated in the work of the conference.

The conference was preceded by extensive discussion of this draft, during the course of which many practical and essential remarks were made. At the same time the republic's population basically approved the draft law, which creates a legal mechanism for ownership of the land. The parliament also supported the political resolution concerning the land, and the draft law was adopted on the first reading.

The legal experts, agricultural specialists, representatives of parliament, and leaders of regional and local administrations who spoke at the conference analyzed the remarks made in the localities, submitted suggestions for improving certain points of the draft law, gave clarifications regarding certain disputed questions, and responded to objections from opponents. It was noted that the illegal trade in land that is occurring at the present time is creating a real threat of its being squandered, and in order for the state to control this process, the corresponding legal base is needed.

The results of the conference were summed up by President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze.

The draft law "On Ownership of Agricultural Land" is a significant event on the path to improving national legislation, and I would call the process of its consideration an event of not only economic but also political, state, and national significance, and it is also significant for future generations. Recognition of private ownership of the land means for each of us a final rejection of the form of management created by the totalitarian system.

When we speak about building a new state, a new structure, many extremely attractive and interesting proposals can remain merely proposals until such time as radical issues of essential significance are resolved, the main one being the problem of the land. That is the way it has always been and that is the way it is today.

When we considered this question at the session of the government (the discussion was then continued in parliament) it was quite correctly stated—Mr. Nodar Chitanava, Mr. Bakur, and others spoke about this in their speeches—that we must discuss one major problem, we must answer the major question—do we recognize the citizen's right to own agricultural land, private ownership of the land, and, second, do we recognize the right to sell, to alienate the land (if you wish, we can find another more acceptable word, a different term). This is the most important question from the standpoint of the principles of a market economy. Everything else in the draft law are details and serve to clarify these two essential rights. Following this will be

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a multitude of revisions and a whole number of laws that parliament will have to adopt.

I fully share the concern of those people who think that legalization of the right to private ownership of the land and alienation of the land, as they say, the creation of a land market, could bring about negative consequences. It would be wrong and unnatural not to express this alarm. Georgia is not the only one with this problem—even countries with huge areas of land such as Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and others have not yet been able to adopt a law on the land or respond to these two basic questions.

Thus we have taken on an extremely difficult problem and have probably touched the most sensitive and painful nerves, which connect with the land, the fatherland, the motherland, the experience and sense of responsibility of each person to the present and future generations. Therefore let us not argue with those people, those opponents, who are sincerely expressing doubts.

Our friend the writer Guram Pandzhikidze said that he is no specialist in these things, but he knows the literature and history well and he knows that in connection with the question of the land in Georgia in the historical past, there have been moments that were cause for alarm. He asked the question: Was the draft law not drawn up too hastily?

Our conversation went like this: We are publishing a draft law that will be considered by specialists, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia. What do we have against having such a fundamental law with such historical significance adopted through statewide and national consensus?

Such is the position of the writer Guram Pandzhikidze. Many others think the same.

At the same time, there is a certain category of opponents who are more motivated by a certain selfish objective—if only for the time being. Through a certain kind of populism they have accumulated political capital and gained the support of a certain segment of the population. Unfortunately, we are frequently unable to give a well-founded response to this category of opponents, or else our response does not always reach the ones for whom it is intended.

Now to the citizens who are sincerely worried that Georgia will suddenly be sold off. We are frequently reminded that the great Ilya Chavchavadze created a special bank to save the Georgian fatherland, the Georgian land, etc. Possibly it is appropriate to recall this here, but we must not forget that we are living in different times, in a different state, and conditions were different in the time of Ilya Chavchavadze.

In Ilya Chavchavadze's times there was no Georgian state. Georgia was made up of two remote provinces of a world empire which was ruled according to the laws of Tsarism by a foreign governor. Therefore private initiative was of immense national significance. The situation today is altogether different. We are adopting the Law on the Land under conditions of the existence of an independent, sovereign, national state of Georgia which has the capability of exercising state control over the land and its purchase and sale. This mechanism is included in the draft Law on the Land.

If we reconcile ourselves to the idea of the possibility of restoring the Soviet Union, the possibility of restoring the totalitarian system, the possibility of turning everything back to the way it was and returning to the old system, then there is indeed cause for alarm.

But if we recognize and fight to be an independent state which can control the processes occurring in the country, then we must say that today there are altogether different legal and state levers to prevent repeating the traditions or the negative phenomena of the past. The current state of Georgia is constitutionally legitimate and independent, and it will become even more independent under the conditions of the country's economic might (and this is precisely the objective served by the Law on the Land), and in no case should it allow or will it allow itself to work against the interests of a civil society, the nation, or the citizens living in Georgia.

All processes must be directed to the good of and in support of the interests of the country, the state, and the people. Such is our strategic goal.

The consideration of the draft Law on Ownership of the Land is a multifaceted question from the political, economic, social, psychological, state, national, and civil standpoint. One might say that it is the most important basis for the large economic reforms and the social and political transformations and turning points.

This is the most realistic and promising step toward the creation of a class of property owners in Georgia.

Attention should be given to the statements of certain speakers. They have noted that at one time we had nationalization of the land and that did not solve the problem of the land. Then Georgia somehow preserved relatively large farmstead plots but, as you know, the problem of the land was still not regulated, land use was still arbitrary, and the land was always being cut up.

After independence was achieved, there was a reform of the land, but it too turned out to be ineffective, chaotic, and fruitless.

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I can say quite seriously that the proposed draft law actually does solve the problem of the land, and we must not let pass this historic chance: Until the peasant or, if you will, the member of the intelligentsia working with the land, is convinced that this is his own private property, the holy of holies, inviolable, that nobody will cut this land up or take it away from him, until that time his attitude toward the land will be one-sided and economically ineffective.

I think that in terms of its basic provisions and assumptions, the draft law meets all the main requirements of the present and future Georgia. It is very important that in discussions the opinion is sometimes expressed that certain people want the issue of the land to be resolved in favor of one group of citizens of Russia and not another. The nationalities question is sometimes raised here. All questions that are raised must be answered.

I cannot conceal my joy over how serious the discussion we now have is from a political, civil, and state standpoint. The opinion that only a Georgian should have the right to own the land is the worst remnant of ancient times that we have inherited. This contradicts the Constitution and the principles of a rule-of-law state and a civil society, not to mention the principles of a market economy.

One can only welcome Mikhail Saakashvili's statement at the session of parliament. Why is a person who has come to our country even a century ago to live here not considered a full-fledged citizen of Georgia? Why do we regard him as a foreigner? He is not a foreign body. The more firmly this person is linked to Georgia, the stronger will be his bond with the land and the more worthy a citizen of Georgia he will be.

There is a mentality according to which a citizen of Georgia who is of another nationality uses the Georgian land he has purchased not in the national interests of Georgia but for another country. Possibly such hostile elements do exist, but they must know that the Constitution, the law, and the national rule-of-law state of Georgia will root out such phenomena.

We must not halt the construction of a market economy, a rule-of- law state, and a civil society in Georgia just because of this "handful of social elements." A land market must be created and Georgian land must be protected. A national rule-of-law Georgian state can do this.

If Georgia's statehood, its independence, the interests of the Georgian people, or the interests of citizens of other nationalities living in Georgia are threatened by any danger, a lever called state management, the law, rights will be put into action.

This process must be controlled in a statelike way. The state will have the right to preference in purchasing land. This is quite acceptable. This practice exists in other states (this has to do with cases when, based on state interests, it is expedient for land subject to alienation to be acquired not by a citizen but by the state).

If a citizen sells a plot of land, the state, if it is in its interests and nobody else's, may buy it. I do not think that a better guarantee exists. Against those who would want to sell land in order to cause harm to Georgia we have a real lever—the law, rights, management, the bank, finances.

For this is in state hands!

Of course, from this standpoint it is necessary to develop the corresponding decree or somehow to reflect this provision in the law.

This idea was put forth by Ms. Roza Lordkipanidze. What this lever might be is another question—will it be a state fund or a state or private bank. Incidentally, our bankers must understand that a very large process has been initiated here and they must react appropriately to it. I do not know what we will call it—a land bank or a state fund—but we must create real financial banking and other state levers in order to offer the population themselves, two-thirds or more of them, the right to become landowners.

There will be real redistribution of the land and ownership of the land based on the Law. An immense part of the population of Georgia will become landowners. The law and the state must provide for this. As for the rural areas, everything must be provided under identical conditions on a rural scale. And the rural member of the intelligentsia might even sometimes be given a certain advantage.

As far back as last year and the year before last when we were deciding to embark upon such a global land reform, I called for the population of the capital and the authorities (Mr. Avtanil Margiani was even given a special assignment) to allot special sections, and we struggled to assimilate all the land areas.

Incidentally, a great deal has been done in the city and many people have taken plots of land. We must now continue this course and give the urban population the opportunity to acquire thousands and tens of thousands of hectares of free land for dachas or garden plots, which in the future will be legalized by the citizen as his private property.

Thus almost everyone in Georgia will be a land owner, including the urban population, which has done a great deal for Georgia's well-being, has shouldered many of

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the difficulties during the time of crisis, and now needs just as much as anyone else.

I call for everyone, from Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Rustavi, and other cities, before it is too late, to take local plots of land wherever possible.

Starting today, the appropriate structures must make sure that every citizen of Georgia who has not yet received a plot of land will get one immediately. We must not forget that this law not only establishes the purchase and sale of land but also creates a landowning class and is a means of overcoming the economic crisis.

I want all citizens of Georgia to be vitally bonded to the land. Then we will be dealing with a different psychology, and a completely different attitude toward the land, and truly statelike thinking by people, which will be linked to the formation of precisely a class of landowners and entrepreneurs.

The enactment of the Law on Land and the instrument for managing the land market are a special issue. What should it be? In general I would say this: The institution for management of these processes should not be too centralized but not entirely without a backbone either. It should be combined with extensive rights, which we have already granted to local self-government. I have in mind management and other structures of villages, settlements, and cities under rayon jurisdiction.

We must arrive at the creation of a particular optimal model of management, and if we create such a realistic system for management of these processes, I do not think there is anything so terrible about the idea that the land could be granted for private ownership to a citizen of Georgia of another nationality who is subject to the national laws of Georgia. For his part citizenship in Georgia means immense confidence and immense responsibility on the part of any entrepreneur or land owner.

I am convinced that if Parliament does not drag out the consideration of the draft Law on the Land too long and we adopt it promptly—even this year we will achieve a very great social and economic effect.

It will be reflected in agricultural output, animal husbandry, and, the main thing, in market relations, the process of price setting, the saturation of the market with goods, and other processes.

Georgia's market will be different in the future. I cannot say how many percentage points of growth there will be, but in the sphere of increasing the productivity of annual crops we will achieve an appreciable effect even this year.

When speaking of the fact that the people of Georgia will avoid a crisis, famine, we have in mind the growth of the production of agricultural products and the creation of a reserve of resources. This is impossible without land reform and the adoption of the Law on the Land. If we adopt this law, all families will have an opportunity to create products. And the state will support this process. We want the country and each family to take this path out of the crisis as soon as possible.

Another subject that disturbs a certain part of society is whether or not rich foreigners will buy up the land in Georgia. All that is not so simple. It will be very difficult for us to preserve the current situation and prohibit the leasing of land to foreign investors, since we do not know when Georgia will become an economically strong country which will be able to resolve the most difficult problems of farming independently. We must especially keep in mind the saline soil, the marshes, and other land that will be subject to assimilation.

More than half the land assimilated in Kokhida is new marshes.

I will give another example. At one time we allotted 10,000 hectares of land and spent tens of millions of rubles of that time on the construction of the Tsnorskiy Complex.

This was the so-called "Chilevich Project." An immense complex was constructed and 15,000 head of cattle were shipped in. Just look at the condition the Tsnorskiy Complex is in today. Nothing is left, everything has been destroyed, there are not even roofs on the stables, not to mention animal husbandry itself.

Why would it be so bad if, say, Chilevich or someone else who is able to were to make free investments, under certain conditions with democratic control by the sovereign state of Georgia, in the Tsnorskiy Complex or Kolkhida?! Our people will find work there. The problem of unemployment and finding jobs would be solved.

The investor would give us a guarantee that he would work in Georgia for 10-to 15 years, recoup the amount he spent, receive a certain amount of profit, and then either leave or remain here as a citizen. The main thing is for the Georgian state not to lose control of Georgia's economy. And that will not happen.

There is nothing so terrible about rational placement of foreign capital if we want to think seriously about saving Georgian land.

Or take this example. Who will look after landslide areas when we become economically strong so as to overcome

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these landslides that are destroying Ajaria and hundreds of thousands of hectares of mountain regions?

Nothing will happen until we call on someone for help, invite them in and interest them. Of course, it would be better to do this by ourselves but, unfortunately, today this is beyond our capabilities. Therefore we will take this path, which has been tested throughout the world.

This does not pertain to agriculture alone. We must have foreign capital invested in all spheres of the economy. There will be no social danger at all if a foreign investor acquires the Rustavi metallurgical plant and increases its capacity three- or fourfold.

There is no other way out today. Foreign capital must come in order to invigorate the economy, but at the same time the state must reliably protect the national market and the national economy. I assure you that this has been guaranteed.

I gave permission to allow into Zestafoni a foreign investor who will provide for the product of 70-80 and in the future, if necessary, 500 megawatts of electric energy so that the Zestafoni plant can operate at full capacity. This will invigorate this unique branch of industry which has died out today because of the crisis.

The same thing can be said about Chiatura.

This means that according to the principles of a market economy under conditions of investment of foreign capital here, each year this facility alone will add $10 million to Georgia's budget.

Or let us turn to another problem. What difference will it make if the board of directors includes three Georgians and three Russians, or one more or one less? The Law of Georgia controls these processes on the territory of the country. This means that both the Russian and the Georgian must obey the Law of Georgia, since Georgia's sovereignty and the primacy of the law as a constitutional and democratic principle are inviolable. We must take the path taken by the advanced world.

I am just drawing your attention to these elementary truths because the judgments of the opposition about them are sometimes very primitive and dilettantish and show that many of our individuals and personalities are still bogged down in the totalitarian system, as if there blows from somewhere that old wind that will return the old system to us.

Remember, Georgia will not return to the old times! We need a new mentality for the economy, management, a new world view.

Therefore we must not be afraid of making bold decisions that envision principles of the market economy, a rule-of-law state, and a civil society.

To be truthful, I was very impressed with the consideration of the draft law on the land in parliament. There were also dilettantish statements there, but the majority engaged in serious discussion. Parliament singled out the problems related to the aforementioned issue reasonably and well. The immense majority supported the draft law. So we are on the right path.

I cannot agree with the statement that there was a time when everything was dictated to us from Moscow, now it is dictated from Washington, and we are losing our independence.

They have in mind the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Is an analysis of policy really possible at such a level? The aid from the World Bank and the Monetary Fund is meant to strengthen independent Georgia.

Is it really possible to compare that old system with today's relations with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank?

It is not a matter of whether or not we can live without aid. Although at a certain stage this problem did exist and it exists partially even now. I have said time and again and I will repeat it now that these are organizations that have pulled many countries of the world out of the swamp of poverty and unhappiness. They are doing everything possible, using all instruments to restructure our debts, and they are conducting negotiations for restructuring with the lowest interest rate so that we will not end up in the swamp of debt, they are advising us how to pay them off, and they themselves are conducting negotiations with the donor countries so that the future of democratic Georgia will be better. The attitude of the World Bank and the Monetary Fund toward Georgia cannot be compared with the past regime. This is a great misunderstanding. It is a mistake.

Nobody can force me as an individual and the president of the country to make a decision that contradicts the country's interests.

If I were not 100 percent certain that this particular historical decision is necessary to the present generations and Georgia of the 21st century, I would not have signed the draft Law on the Land and would not have submitted it to parliament.

If anybody knows the price of land, it is I, and I understand what it would mean to adopt a hasty and ill-considered decision here.

Why do you think, gentlemen, that only you are patriots and others are not?

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I understand quite well that the previously existing system of mass communications, the press, radio, and television has changed. The circulation of the newspaper of that time, KOMUNISTI was 600,000 and SOPLIS TSKHOVREBA—500,000. Practically every family had a library.

The situation is different now. It is necessary to solve the problems of the national press, radio, and television according to different principles.

It will be necessary to create the proper conditions for the mass media since it is necessary to inform the people of every draft law and to analyze them at the level of the idea of national justice.

If the consideration of the draft law is now proceeding relatively painlessly, our radio and television deserve a great deal of the credit.

I must say that very active explanatory work began on radio and television the day after the completion of the government session.

A certain amount has been done with respect to publishing everything possible in the press, on radio, and on television. Although here too we have allowed certain shortcomings. I think we should publish my letter to parliament regarding the draft law on the land, which reflected the position of the president and clarified certain crucial points of the president's policy.

We must not give the impression that the president is waiting for something and is not confident that we are doing the right thing. Especially since that is not the case.

I would like to call upon the president's authorized representatives, representatives of administrations, and leaders of villages to solve the problem of providing information to the population. Both the people and the government need this.

I remember quite well the years of the Patriotic War when the people could not get newspapers, but both in Tbilisi and in the rayon centers there were special newspaper windows where we could read them. That is where we received our first information, usually in the mornings.

According to an inspection conducted on my instructions by the Ministry of Communications and the Post Office in certain rayons, there are only two or three subscribers to SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA.

Under these conditions, how can we organize explanatory work in the krays, rayons, cities, and villages?

Today, my friends, you all have some kind of budget, bad or good, but you can all subscribe to SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA and SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA, the Armenian and Azerbaijani newspapers that are published here, and also others that cover these problems.

If you were to set up a newspaper window in the center of the village or rayon, the people would go and read it. Every peasant is interested in the draft law on ownership of the land.

I think the local newspapers, television and radio centers, and programs should devote more attention to draft laws and other documents.

First of all, everyone should subscribe to the newspapers that publish laws, the basic program speeches of the president of the state, statements of the state minister, government decrees, and the materials that reflect policy and its formation and serve to implement policy.

Otherwise people will not be able to keep abreast of events, and for them to remain in the dark is socially and, if you will, politically most dangerous.

The political and theoretical level exhibited today at our meeting on the draft law is quite adequate for the population to gain a correct understanding of what is going on in the country.

I agree with Mr. Niko Lekishvili that until we have a basic policy in the area of control and execution it will be difficult to speak of a full state policy.

More attention should be given to work with those citizens who do not understand the Georgian language. We will not avoid this problem.

Everyone must study the state language, but we must create conditions whereby we achieve respect for the language and culture by showing respect for other nations and languages.

This is a serious shortcoming of our explanatory work and the culture of our activity, which must be rectified.

There are a number of other problems, including the main one—the problem of bread. This problem was raised here by Mr. Mikhail Chkuaseli, who was then supported by Mr. Temur Shashiashvili and other speakers.

It is gratifying to have the question of the problem of bread and the deregulation of bread prices posed so actively and fundamentally precisely from chairmen of administrations and authorized representatives. I know that here as well as regarding the draft Law on the Land the situation has become strained not so much in the rayons as in the political parties and the power structures.

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If there is coverage on television, after my speech the opposition will say: Shevardnadze intends to make the population even poorer. That is demagoguery and populism.

Just as there was misunderstanding regarding the adoption of the Law on the Land, so it is here. Such a situation cannot be tolerated.

The fact is that Georgia is completing one of the stages of its life—life thanks to humanitarian aid. This source no longer exists, it is exhausted.

They say to us—we will come to you with investments, we will help, but you must work and create the products yourselves.

We have taken a very important step since we are not collecting a tax for bringing in wheat. This is an immense incentive. Even with the prices that exist today, which we call "state prices," the wheat business is very profitable, I would even say the most profitable business. I cannot forgive those people who let the mistake regarding tax exemptions slip into the Law. I am speaking to all who can hear: It was a mistake for us to set the deadlines, and this mistake must be rectified. Let everyone who can ship in wheat know about this.

Buyers have already made themselves known. Mr. Vano Chkhartishvili has already established the appropriate contacts and found funds for shipping in 150,000-200,000 tonnes of grain (wheat).

Mr. Niko Lekishvili has reported to me that we have several groups of businessmen who want to ship in wheat which after a certain amount of time we will be able to sell even more cheaply than we are selling it today.

Because of the importation of wheat and the development of the wheat business we are solving many problems, but we must devote attention to other problems as well.

These questions, questions of solving the bread problem, are linked to the land problem. As soon as the population experiences the advantage from raising wheat and corn, I assure you, in one or two years we will be cultivating all the land that is standing idle today. Thus there will be a very great incentive to realize an ancient dream—to optimally increase the production of our own wheat.

This problem cannot be solved today. It will take us a certain amount of time.

In connection with what has been said, the good ideas—of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the State Minister, other ministers, and the corporation—and, I assume, the changes in the importation, production, and sale of grain should be implemented in conjunction with the chairmen of administrations and authorized representatives at such rates and on such a scale that this process is as advantageous as possible and not harmful to the population.

I think that it is necessary, in connection with the issues under consideration, to create under the leadership of Niko Lekishvili a group which would include Tedo Ninidze, Bakur Gullua, Nodar Chitanava, Merab Chkhenkeli, Tetre Mamradze, David Yakobidze, Eurab Katamadze, Temur Pipiya, and authorized representatives of the president.

A working document should be prepared for parliament and the president's authorized representatives should okay it.

The corresponding committees of parliament should consider these documents in their work.

Very important and, I would say, fundamental considerations have been expressed here.

I ask the corresponding specialists of the apparatus to become involved in this activity and complete the work in the near future, possibly within a week. It would not be a bad idea for a representative of the parliament committee to participate in it.

Now a couple of words about the budget for 1996. Here is how the plan for its execution in January looks: On the one hand it seems that there have been positive strides and tendencies; on the other—there is cause for a certain amount of alarm.

I will not go through all the rayons; I will just name a couple of them: The region of Kakheti has fulfilled the budget plan for January by 87 percent, while Telavi completed the task by 140 percent, and Signakhi—by 104 percent, that is, there are reserves and resources.

The zone of Imereti fulfilled the plan for January by 67 percent. A sad case. The situation must be rectified.

Samegerlo and Zemo Svneti fulfilled the budget plan for January by 94 percent, but Sugdudi and Sugdinskiy Rayon—by 162 percent, and Abashskiy Rayon—by 170 percent.

The region of Shida Kartli fulfilled the plan for January by 121 percent. I want to thank the leaders of the kray. The plan was fulfilled in Gori by 166 percent, and Kareli—by 114 percent, Khashuri—by 106 percent, that is, in places where they tried very hard they managed to get the job done.

Kvemo Kartli fulfilled the plan for January by 79 percent. This indicator is not in line with the promises, but there are certain exemplary rayons here as well:

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Gardabanskiy (98 percent), Dmanisskiy (113 percent), Tsalkskiy (100 percent), and others.

In Guriya the indicators are even worse than in the region of Imereti—64 percent, and there is no justification for this.

I know there are difficulties, but they must be overcome.

The initiatives and undertakings are good, but the time has come to reflect everything in the budget and the economic indicators.

Samtskhe-Dzhavkheti fulfilled the plan for January by 94 percent. That is all right, but with more effort the indicators would have been better, although in this region there are rayons with exemplary indicators as well.

The region of Mtskheta-Tianeti fulfilled the plan by 109 percent, Akhalgori—by 114 percent, and Mtskhetskiy Rayon—by 108 percent. Kazberi had good indicators this time as well.

The region of Racha-Lechkhumi fulfilled the plan for January by 105 percent. I do not think it could be more difficult for any region than it was for this one, but obligations are obligations and they fulfill them here.

A couple of words about industry. For the first time in many years not only has the process of the decline of production come to a halt but there is even a certain amount of forward movement.

In spite of the fact that the energy crisis continues, and January was no exception in this respect, industry has still created 33.5 million lari, that is 1.5 million lari or 4-4.5 percent more than last year. For the first time during these years there is a positive tendency in development.

I am convinced that if we try, at the end of February and especially in March, in the first quarter, we will be able achieve a significant breakthrough. Everyone is paying attention to this. Everyone must make his contribution to the cause.

I have some remarks: In Ajaria the fulfillment of the budget plan amounted to 59 percent and in Tbilisi as compared to last year there was a decrease of 10 percent. I must tell Mr. Vadri Shoshitaishvili that the decrease in Tbilisi was much worse than in the rest of Georgia.

Kutaisi fulfilled the plan for January by 32 percent and Chiatura—by 24 percent. There were arrears in certain other regions as well.

I am speaking about this since we all want the current quarter to be the beginning of a big turning point. In spite of the complexities and difficulties, this is absolutely possible.

We must maximally mobilize rayon, city, and kray administrations, the central apparatus, the ministries, and the ministers. We cannot forgive anyone, regardless of how kindly disposed to them we are, for irresponsibility or backsliding.

For example, I have announced that I am especially listening to the report on the activity of the Customs Service for the two months, and it is from these results that we will make a judgment about the further fate of the service and its leaders.

New personnel have come to the Customs Service and the results seem to be fairly good. They cannot even be compared with preceding years, but the real possibilities are being utilized by only 20-30 percent. In any case, that is the way it is for now. We will see what February will bring.

I do not want to use inexact figures, but it is apparent that certain people in the Customs Service and elsewhere are issuing directives that are either unjustified or run contrary to the law and the interests of the central budget.

All this leads us to grave results.

We will take measures in connection with certain specific phenomena. I will not frighten anyone in advance, I respect everyone, I love everyone, but nobody more than Georgia.

Therefore you too should treat everyone under you the same way. You must make those who do not follow instructions do so, some of them through administrative measures and others—with the help of economic levers and the supremacy of the law and state principles.

I want to thank the sociological service of the State Chancellery which, in conjunction with the Dushetskaya administration conducted a very interesting public opinion study, which it did in the capital as well.

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The study confirmed that if we, the authorities, act boldly, we will be acting in compliance with the mood of our people.

I ask all of you to keep this in mind. The people support the authorities, including the draft law on the land, which the parliament has already begun to consider.

The new Law on the Land will contribute to the development of a market economy and the strengthening and advancement of a rule-of- law state and a civil society.

The draft law on the land was created at the level of world and national experience and I am convinced that the parliament will adopt it and the people will support it.

There is no national or social threat connected to the draft law. On the contrary, the law will contribute to the flourishing of the agrarian sector and the entire economy as well as the well-being of the people.

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Estonia

Estonia: Foreign Ministry Calls Primakov Rights Criticism 'Unjustified'

LD2903142496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1313 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, March 29 (Interfax) — The Estonian Foreign Ministry has described as unjustified accusations of human rights violations brought against Estonia by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

Spokesman for the Estonian Foreign Ministry Yuriy Arusoo commented in an Interfax interview Friday on Primakov's pronouncements made at a news conference in Moscow Thursday after his meeting with Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen.

Primakov said "we are dissatisfied with discriminatory policy against the Russian-speaking population in some Baltic republics, including Estonia. We think it must be stopped."

"We take the statements of Primakov and the resolutions of the State Duma as electioneering rhetorics," said the spokesman. "We think such accusations will increase in view of the presidential elections in Russia."

Commenting on Primakov's request to Swedish leaders to "use their influence on Estonia for the sake of a just solution to this problem," referring to the position of Russian-speaking persons, Arusoo said "that country is well aware of our real problems and we are sure it will not hamper the situation with non-native residents and influence our policy, for it does not violate human rights."

Estonia: Meri Says NATO Expansion 'Decided Upon'

LD2903152596 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1200 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The expansion of NATO has been decided upon, Estonian President Lennart Meri said when summing up his visit to Belgium and the Netherlands at Kadriorg [president's residence] on 29 March.

Meri said that this was surely known to the politicians of Russia who have protested against the possible NATO membership of the Baltic states.

At the visit which began on 25 March], Meri met NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and made a speech to the ambassadors of the NATO member states. Meri said that NATO leaders understood his remarks, according to which security is indivisible and cannot include half tones.

Meri also met Dutch and Belgian leaders and top-ranking officials of the EU. Meri said that the meetings assured him that the EU will not accept members in groups but will consider each country individually.

Estonia: Meri Says Border Talks Pointless Before Russian Elections

LD2903153096 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1400 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Estonian President Lennart Meri told journalists on 29 March that he did not see any benefit in holding an Estonian-Russian summit to resolve the border issue before the Russian presidential election.

Meri added that during the remaining days before the Russian presidential elections, the entire social energy of Russia is focused only on the elections.

Meri noted that the main issue of the border dispute was not whether the border was a kilometer or two this way or that but how Russia was to handle the fact that Estonia had been incorporated into the Soviet Union for a period of time.

Estonia: Moldova's Snegur Describes Relations at Meeting With Meri

LD0204190096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1810 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, April 2 (Interfax) — Moldovan President Mircea Snegur said at a meeting with his Estonian counterpart Lennart Meri that the Russian State Duma resolution de facto declaring the Belovezhye Accord on disbandment of the USSR "is of no consequence for Moldova or, for that matter, for the statehood of the neighboring Ukraine."

Snegur described his country's relations with Ukraine as very good, the Estonian president's press service told Interfax.

Moldova's cooperation with Romania is "close and friendly," he said.

Moldova will work tenaciously for integration with the West, he promised.

"Moldova does not think that expansion of NATO poses a danger and is cooperating with it in the framework of the Partnership for Peace program," Snegur said.

Snegur invited Meri to come to Chisinau on an official visit.

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Latvia

Latvia: Ulmanis Praises Yeltsin's Move on Chechnya

LD0104204096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1757 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, April 1 (Interfax) — By announcing the plan for peace settlement in Chechnya, Russian President Boris Yeltsin has displayed the goodwill of Russia as a member of the Council of Europe to resolve difficult situations by civilized methods, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis told Interfax in Riga Monday.

"Russia has recently been admitted to the Council of Europe, and it needs to follow the standards accepted within this organization," Ulmanis said. "I believe that settlement of the conflict by democratic peaceful means is the only acceptable method. I and Latvian MPs have repeatedly urged the Russian president to do that," he said.

When the Council of Europe voted on Russia's admission, Latvian representatives voted in favor, thus "showing hope that Russia will manage to resolve the Chechen problem by acceptable means," Ulmanis said.

Latvia: Ulmanis Advised To Begin Border Talks With Russia 'Immediately'

LD0104153296 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1301 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Security Council today decided to advise the government to begin talks with Russia on border issues immediately. A session of the National Security Council listened to the foreign minister's report on possible ways of resolving the issue of the Latvian-Russian border.

President Guntis Ulmanis told Latvian radio about what was said at the session.

[begin Ulmanis recording] We passed a resolution on the commencement of active talks with Russia on putting the Latvian-Russian border in order. This issue is also related to the EU — no one in the EU will talk to us without a well-ordered border. We worked out a basic concept for talks on the border, which could serve as a basis for future rounds of talks. I think that this issue should also move forward as early as this year. [end recording]

Latvia: Ulmanis Rules Out Joining 4-Nation Integration Agreement

LD0104200996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1757 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, April 1 (Interfax) — Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis said there is no way his country will join the March 29 integration agreement between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

Latvia will stay on the path toward integration into the European Union and NATO, and the end-point of this process is entry into those organizations, he told Interfax in a Monday interview.

This does not contradict the development of good relations with Russia and Belarus, and equal and mutually beneficial cooperation with other CIS governments signing similar agreements, Ulmanis said.

The integration of Russia, Belarus and other former Soviet republics does not threaten the stability and safety of the Baltic governments, he said.

Lithuania

Lithuania: Foreign Minister Views Strategy for Joining EU

WS0204080496 Vilnius ELTA in English 1644 GMT 1 Apr 96

[From "News Bulletin" No. 980]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, April 1, ELTA — Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys considers that the Baltic states should not change the "rules of the game" while joining the European Union (EU). "That was not a realistic view-point", Lithuanian Foreign Ministry leader stated at the press conference on Monday while commenting the statements of Estonian leaders that their country was much better prepared for membership in the EU than other Baltic countries and would try to achieve it separately from Latvia and Lithuania.

According to Gylys, much has been done in order to achieve that the negotiations of the Baltic states would begin at the same time like with other Central and Eastern European countries, for instance, Poland and the Czech Republic. The negotiations with the associate EU members will begin 6 months after the end of the currently underway intergovernmental conference — that was confirmed at the summit meeting in Madrid. According to Gylys, the idea was supported in Turin, which yesterday saw the beginning of the one-year intergovernmental conference.

It would be too early at present to reject the "strong argument" that the Baltic states should "keep together"

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while integrating to the European Union, Minister Gylys said. According to him, these states would be considered as a group during the negotiations.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister also stressed that he did not considered that the situation of the Baltic states differed from the economic view-point, although "everybody, and first of all we ourselves were trying to convince that it was "very different". [quotation marks as received] "We left the Soviet Union at one time and survived the economic political transformation", Minister Gylys said. According to him, Estonia began its monetary reform a bit earlier, what was its advantage and Lithuania's mistake for being late. "But the then our political thinking prevented from doing so", Minister Gylys added.

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